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PAYING THE BILLS FOR GOVERNMENT HOUSING

Advocates of Government-aided housing are, as a rule, quite oblivious to the important question of who is to pay the bills for it and are apt to dismiss this difficult aspect of the subject by saying that "Government will do that."

The "Government" is such a vague and indefinite entity that to many minds there is little realization of the economic processes that actually result when a nation embarks upon a wholesale plan of Government housing or of Government-aided housing.

Having discussed housing as a political issue and housing in the economic system, and having contrasted the results obtained under 4 rival Government housing policies showing their productivity, or yield of houses, and its relation to the subsidy and to prices, the English journal, *Housing and Town Planning*, recently turned to a review of housing finance during the 10 years in which England has extended Government-aid to housing on a wholesale scale—845,644 houses having been produced in that period with Government subsidy of one form or another.

The facts presented with regard to one group of houses alone, viz. those built under the Addison regime, under the law passed in 1919, are indeed startling. *Garden Cities and Town Planning* says:

Unhappily in the case of the largest item of expense—the 1919 Act—taxpayers are and must remain in the dark as to their financial contribution toward the provision of 174,000 houses. *It is no exaggeration to say that this generation will pass away before it becomes possible to estimate, with anything like accuracy, the cost of the 1919 experiment which seems to have been designed to baffle the inquisitive.*

We know that the average cost of each of these houses was £1080, and their total cost about £190,000,000. We know that loans were raised from the State and locally by the municipal authorities at interest which, over a long period of years, exceeds the large figure given above. * * * We know that the average annual loss is about £50 per house, and the total payment during 9 years is £63,000,000 for England, Wales and Scotland. * * * It might be thought that the *maximum*

cost to the nation when the loans are paid off 50 years hence will be in the neighborhood of £400,000,000, including the amount of the debt incurred in Scotland. We therefore leave to persistent readers the task of calculating the *minimum* burden to be borne by them, their sons, and grandsons.

In respect to the Acts of 1923 and 1924 the facts and figures are simple. The subsidies are fixed sums and there are no unknown quantities. For 20 or 40 years the State will pay for houses already built the sums set forth, and has already paid those which may be thus summarized, experimentally :

Subsidies payable under the 1919 Act <i>about</i>	£400,000,000.
Subsidies payable under the Additional Powers 1923 and 1924 Acts	£137,729,183.
<i>Subsidies Paid</i> for all Acts for England, Wales and Scotland	£ 82,621,517''

From which it appears that the greatly overburdened taxpayers of England have already been called upon to pay out of their earnings, the enormous sum of \$413,107,585 as subsidies on the 928,223 houses already built, and that they and their sons and grandsons face the necessity of paying in future the colossal sum of \$2,688,645,915 on these houses, which—even after all these sums are paid—the Government will not possess.

It is an extraordinary situation and one that should give the advocates of Government-aided housing pause.

Emphasizing the important part that the cost of money plays in the cost of housing—as heavy a cost as the cost of construction—*Garden Cities and Town Planning* points out that on an original cost of £200,000, assumed as the cost of building 500 houses at a cost of £400 each, this loan may cost in interest for a period of 30 years £300,000. Principal and interest to the extent of £500,000 must therefore be paid off for houses that have cost but £200,000 to build.

The reason why the local authorities in England are so friendly to the scheme of housing subsidized by the Central Government is pointed out. If houses are built under the Act of 1923 the local authorities will receive £120 on each house, spread over a period of 20 years, or a total of £60,000. They will draw in rents an average of 8s-6d a week for 50 years. From these rents the local authorities will receive a total of £552,500. Omitting depreciation, cost of upkeep and bad debts, it is pointed out that the local authorities will have done a good stroke of business and that that kind of housing most decidedly does pay—the *local authorities*. If they accept the “special conditions” of the 1924 Act, the total subsidy received will be higher and the balance at the end of the period will be more—to say nothing of the value of 500 houses, which will not be in ruins at the end of the time, and which will be the property of the local authorities.

A striking exposition this of how the English scheme of houses subsidized by the central Government works. It is not surprising that under these circumstances the 1800 local authorities throughout England should be so insistent, for a continuance of the Government subsidy for housing. For, the locality that is benefited by the housing is not called upon to carry the burdens that result in that benefit, but is able to shift that burden to other shoulders and to other parts of the country.

From the point of view of Government, it is a most unsound and unwise policy—somewhat similar to the situation that exists in the United States by which the citizens of a few states pay the income tax of the entire country.

Garden Cities and Town Planning has rendered a great public service in thus presenting for the consideration of the public the true facts with regard to the financing of Government-aided housing in England.

TAX EXEMPTION AND LUXURIES

Should the taxpayer against his will, by the imposition of taxes, be compelled to pay for what the average man considers luxuries to be enjoyed by a limited group of citizens, on the plea that they are unable to provide adequate housing facilities for themselves without resorting to the device of tax exemption of the buildings which they occupy?

This question is presented in rather striking fashion by a consideration of the latest model tenements that are now rising on the lower East Side of New York, way over almost to the East River on the block bounded by Grand, Columbia, Sheriff and Broome streets. Here, with great public spirit two prominent members of the community are financing a project, the total cost of which will be a million and a half dollars and which will cover a whole block and will provide housing for several hundred families. This is the latest venture sponsored by the New York State Housing Board and undertaken by the Amalgamated Housing Corporation with funds provided by Lieutenant Governor Herbert H. Lehman and Aaron Rabinowitz.

When the New York State Housing Law was enacted a few years ago it was announced that exemption from local taxation was one of its essential features; and the scheme was loudly heralded as a means of housing so-called slum dwellers, then unable to provide proper housing accommodations for themselves, and consequently forced to live under conditions detrimental to their own welfare and that of the community.

With that leverage of improving the hard lot of the slum dweller, and upon the statement of the State Board of Housing that without

tax exemption of the buildings there could be no successful housing project inaugurated for this class of person, the local authorities in New York City—though with some misgivings—passed an ordinance permitting exemption from taxation for a term of years of buildings erected under the terms of the State Housing Law.

When one learns that these new buildings, though only 6 stories high, are to be provided with automatic electric elevators, and with electric refrigeration for each apartment, as well as steam heat, hot and cold running water in several places in each apartment, hard wood floors, electric light and every modern convenience of living, one wonders whether tax exemption for that class of building is either warranted or desirable. The officials of the State Housing Board when questioned on this point say: "There will, of course, be local tax exemption on the improvements under the terms of the State Housing Law."

It appears that the State Board of Housing does not consider electric elevators and electric refrigeration luxuries.

No one, of course, can quarrel with the desire of the State Housing Board or the sponsors of this model tenement to introduce higher standards and greater comforts and conveniences of living.

What one does question, however, is whether the city is justified in compelling the rest of the taxpayers—many of whom cannot afford such luxuries themselves—to carry upon their shoulders the burden of providing these luxuries to a limited group of people, who evidently are quite able to pay for them.

The present instance indicates how far a policy of tax exemption may lead a community. Those who believe such a policy unsound in principle have always realized that tendencies such as are shown in this case are likely to result. It always happens where so intangible a thing as the "city" or the "state" is concerned. It is so easy to shift larger and larger burdens to that intangible entity the "state" or the "city".

This has been the tendency throughout Europe where Government housing and Government-aided housing prevail to so great an extent. France is a case in point. A few years ago a law was passed there providing for the granting of vast sums of money from the state treasury to aid home builders. As originally enacted the law was carefully limited to those people who were incapable—because of their economic position—of achieving home ownership unaided, and the law in its application was limited to so called "cheap dwellings" which were carefully defined as those coming within a certain rent and whose owners were receiving wages not exceeding a certain amount. A few years

later, we find the law changed, with these same privileges extended to people higher up in the social and economic scale—people quite able to finance their own home projects without making these demands upon the taxpayer.

No one would detract in the slightest degree from the credit that is due the projectors of these new East Side Model Tenements, providing better accommodations for numbers of families who otherwise would find it difficult to achieve them. But it would seem to us that a limit has been reached. People in crowded Manhattan who are able to afford living rooms that average 12 by 18 feet in size—as is contemplated in this new building—and who can afford such luxuries as automatic electric elevators and electric refrigeration, to say nothing of steam heat and hard wood floors, should certainly be able to pay the economic rent which such luxuries require, and not ask their fellow citizens to bear their burdens for them.

The building of model tenements—notwithstanding the statements to the contrary made by the State Housing Board—is in no sense dependent upon tax exemption. The Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments occupied entirely by Negroes, developed along similar lines, have proved that conclusively; for those houses were financed entirely without tax exemption. The people who live in those buildings do not ask the rest of the taxpayers to pay part of their rent for them. They are unwilling to accept this disguised form of public charity.

In the light of this latest development it seems to us that the time has come when the local authorities in New York should carefully reconsider the advisability of continuing tax exemption of future buildings.

THE ECONOMICS OF HOUSING

Benjamin Tuska, President of the Educational Alliance of New York, some months ago discussed the economics of housing in connection with New York's problems, and more particularly what is to be done with the great East Side of that city now suffering from the fact that many of its buildings are antiquated and undesirable, and that there is no longer the newly arrived immigrant willing to put up with the kind of accommodation that so much of the East Side has to offer.

On this occasion, Mr. Tuska said in part:

Our housing problem is complicated with the economic question generally. Better buildings mean dearer dwellings, for the real estate investor wants an adequate return on his capital, and since the investor is about sixth he has to pay at least five profits before he can get any return from his investment. These are, first, that of the land speculator; second, that of the building and loan man; third, that of the broker

who endeavors to provide the financial "set-up"; fourth, that of the builder or manufacturer, and, fifth, that of the broker who effects the sale.

This addition to the cost of manufacturing a house and selling it parallels the assorted profits the consumer has to provide before he can get his food supply—the farmer, the speculator in produce, the general store that carries the farmer, the railway, the middleman in the shape of the wholesale dealer and then the retailer. We have seen how difficult it is to help the farmer and not make the consumer pay for it.

INCOME AND RENT

The question what proportion of the family income should be expended for the rent of the home in which the family lives, or for its purchase on the installment plan as the equivalent of rent, is one which has given housing reformers considerable concern ever since the housing movement started in the United States. There has never been any scientific determination of the proper ratio between family income and rent, but only a rule of thumb statement to the effect that a family should not pay more than 20% of its income for that purpose. The amount thus expended in Europe is much lower. In some of our large cities in America we know it is considerably higher. But just what a normal basis is has never been determined. It is a hard thing to determine.

Now comes the U. S. Department of Labor with a survey made by it about a year ago of the income and expenditures of 506 families of employees of the Federal Government. Approximately 100 families with an income not exceeding \$2500 per year were covered by this inquiry in each of the following cities: Boston, New York, Baltimore, Chicago and New Orleans—thus giving a pretty fair average representation of the country as a whole, so far as large cities are concerned.

The results of this inquiry disclosed that in these families on the average 19.3% of the family income was expended for housing. Some of the families were purchasing homes, but most of them were paying rent. Using this ratio between family income and expenditure for rent, or its equivalent, as a yard stick, the Department of Labor works out a schedule of what priced homes a family can afford to purchase on the installment plan, or to rent, as the case may be, with incomes of a given amount, starting at \$2,000 and ranging up to \$6,000.

Taking \$4,000 as the cost of a modest home—which they point out would have to be in one of the smaller cities and off the main street, or in a remote suburb of a large city—it is shown that if a home costing even as little as \$4,000 is to be purchased on the installment plan and paid for in 20 years in equal annual installments, it would require an

average principal payment of \$200 per year. Interest payments would add an average of about \$150 a year, making a total annual payment of \$350 a year, if it is sought to amortize the debt in 20 years. In addition, they estimate real estate taxes and insurance at \$50 a year, and—if the man is a handy man and can paint his own house, replace broken window panes and patch the roof, as the average American used to do years ago—the cost of repairs is conservatively estimated as \$30 a year. From which it is concluded that it will cost the occupier \$430 a year for his rent for a period of 20 years; but at the end of that time the family will own the home free and clear.

Assuming that families are to pay out roughly 20% or one-fifth of the family income to meet this annual charge of \$430, it would be necessary for that income to be not less than \$2,228. In other words, a family with an income of \$2,228 is warranted in purchasing a \$4,000 home and paying for it on the installment plan, provided the payments are spread over a period of 20 years.

The following table shows the cost of a home that a family can afford to purchase on this basis with given incomes starting at \$2,000 and not exceeding \$6,000.

<i>Income</i>	<i>Cost of Home</i>
\$2,000.....	\$3,591
\$2,500.....	4,488
\$3,000.....	5,386
\$3,500.....	6,284
\$4,000.....	7,181
\$5,000.....	8,977
\$6,000.....	10,772

The Department points out that paying for a home on a 20 year basis means that those who purchase a \$4,000 house will pay for it ultimately \$8,600—a striking illustration of the extent to which a man is punished for his poverty; for if he had the capital to buy the house outright, he would buy it for its real value and not have to pay double its real value. The Department, in commenting on these figures, very rightly emphasizes the fact that unquestionably most families buying homes today are paying a greater amount of the family income than the figures given above, and many families renting homes are paying more than one-fifth of their family income. This ratio varies as between cities and as between families in the same cities.

What the Department does not say—and what it might have said—is that these figures indicate clearly that there are some families who should not attempt to become home owners.

HOUSING MANAGERS ORGANIZE

A nation-wide organization of those actively in charge of model

housing enterprises has been given permanent form with national scope in the newly organized National Council on Housing Practice. The creation of this new organization of housing managers is an outcome of the getting together of this group upon the occasion of the National Housing Conference at Philadelphia a year ago.

At that time on the suggestion of Lawrence Veiller, after a preliminary meeting in New York on Mr. Veiller's call, it was suggested that those responsible for the management of model housing enterprises might find it profitable to come together on the occasion of the National Housing Conference and compare experiences and confer on mutual problems. Such a meeting was had a year ago and it was found so profitable that it was decided to stay together in a loosely organized group to see whether there was not in their common experiences and mutual problems sufficient to warrant their staying together in perhaps some more definitely organized form later on.

The same group met in New York last December and at that time heard reports from various sub-committees that had been appointed at the Philadelphia meeting. These reports included the following subjects: A report by a Committee on Design, Construction and Operation of Model Houses, by Walter Kruesi of the Brooklyn Garden Apartments as Chairman of that Committee; a report by the Committee on Uniform Accounting Classifications by A. C. Livermore of Wilmerding, Pennsylvania, as Chairman; and a report on Social Work in Housing by Abraham Goldfeld of the Lavanburg Homes as Chairman, to which reference will be found elsewhere in these columns.

In a two-day conference the members discussed these various questions and also the question of the form of permanent organization which might be desirable. As a result of these deliberations, a National Council on Housing Practice has been organized "for the purpose of collecting, interpreting, comparing and disseminating information revealed in the actual operation of limited dividend and other housing enterprises".

C. H. Holmes, President of the City and Suburban Homes Company of N. Y. was elected President, Ernest Schofield of the Phipps Houses of New York as Secretary-Treasurer, and an Executive Committee consisting of Herbert Emmerich of the N. Y. City Housing Corporation as Chairman, A. C. Livermore of the Westinghouse Air Brake Company at Wilmerding, A. J. Parkin of the Marshall Field Apartments in Chicago and the President and Secretary-Treasurer, as ex-officio members, was constituted.

The National Council on Housing Practice has as its members at the present time, the following housing companies:

Amalgamated Housing Corporation of New York, Brooklyn Garden Apartments of Brooklyn, the Charlesbank Homes of Boston, The Cincinnati Model Homes Company of Cincinnati, City Housing Corporation of New York, City and Suburban Homes Company of New York, The Jemison Companies of Birmingham, Alabama, The Julius Rosenwald Fund of Chicago, Fred L. Lavanburg Homes of New York, Marshall Field Apartments of Chicago, Octavia Hill Association of Philadelphia, Open Stair Dwellings Company of New York, Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments of New York, Phipps Houses of New York, and the Westinghouse Air Brake Home Building Company of Pittsburgh.

In addition to these housing companies they have also given representation and membership to the following national, local and state housing associations: the National Housing Association, the Philadelphia Housing Association, the Pittsburgh Housing Association and the State Housing Board of New York.

The Executive Committee is now working out the terms of qualifications for membership in the organization and a policy regarding its work and the financing of its activities during the coming year. Applications for membership by those eligible should be addressed to Mr. Ernest Schofield, 331 East 31st Street, New York City.

SOCIAL WORK IN MODEL HOUSING ENTERPRISES

Most model housing enterprises, from their very early beginnings a half century ago, have generally had, to greater or less extent, some form of social activity. The form most natural to expect and which has generally accompanied these enterprises has been some activity for the smaller children, generally a kindergarten, nursery or playground.

With the increased development of model housing enterprises on a large scale in recent years, particularly in New York and Chicago, it is not surprising to find greater and greater emphasis being placed upon a well-organized community life; for such enterprises developed as they are being developed today, have become small communities in themselves, often housing as many people as a good sized village of a few years ago.

An interesting and valuable study with regard to this aspect of model housing enterprises has been made during the past year by a Sub-committee on Social Work in Housing Developments appointed by the National Council on Housing Practice, referred to in the previous article.

As a means of considering that question, it was decided to appoint a special Sub-committee to ascertain the extent to which such activities were already carried on in the various housing enterprises throughout the country. The Chairman of this Committee was Abraham Goldfeld, of the Lavanburg Homes in New York, with Roscoe Conkling

Bruce of the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments in New York and John B. Edwards of the Octavia Hill Association in Philadelphia as associates.

In order to ascertain the actual practice in the various model housing enterprises throughout the country, the Committee formulated a questionnaire which was sent out to managers of 40 housing enterprises of this kind distributed throughout all parts of the United States. Nineteen replies to this questionnaire were received. Of these 6 enterprises reported that they had no form of social activities whatever, and 13 others gave detailed information with regard to the work undertaken by them.

The questions asked, in addition to such general questions as would seek to give a picture of the housing enterprise itself, included the following:

A description of the type of social activities conducted, to be fully described; the extent to which the activities were practiced, the number of times per week, the number of people attending, the degree of supervision given, etc. In addition, they were asked to report whether they had club rooms, playgrounds, nurseries, assembly hall, library, game room, etc., also the cost of the social activities per year and what proportion or percentage that cost bore to the total cost of maintenance of the housing scheme; also whether the tenants contributed to the cost of the social activities or was this covered by the rent?; who conducted the activities; do the tenants help in running them?; what percentage of the tenants participate in these activities?; whether any publications are issued by the housing enterprise and what cooperative undertakings are conducted at the development

The housing schemes reporting various forms of social activities, running the whole gamut involved in these questions, were the City Housing Corporation with its Sunnyside Gardens development in Queens, the Octavia Hill Association in Philadelphia, the Lavanburg Homes in the N. Y.'s Lower East Side, the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments for Negroes in Harlem, the Marshall Field Garden Apartments for the white collar class in Chicago, the Phipps houses in East 31st Street, New York, the Charlesbank homes in Boston, the Westinghouse Air Brake Company's development at Wilmerding, Pa., the Model town of Mariemont near Cincinnati, the Cincinnati Model Homes Company for both Negroes and whites in Cincinnati itself, the Garden Apartments at Bayonne, New Jersey, the Woodlawn development at Wilmington, Delaware and the City and Suburban Homes Company's various developments in New York City.

From the replies received the Committee finds that adult activities in one form or another and a playground for children are the major activities maintained by such model housing schemes. Kindergartens appear in only 3 developments and have been organized very recently.

All persons interested in the conduct or development of model housing enterprises will find it both interesting and profitable to obtain a

copy of the detailed report on this subject from Mr. Goldfeld, Chairman of the Sub-committee, who should be addressed at 132 Goerck Street, New York City.

HOME OWNERS THE BEST EMPLOYEES.

A number of large employers of labor have recently testified publicly to the fact that home owners make the best workers. The President of Armour & Company, the great meat packers, said recently, "The more home owners there are among a company's employees the better it will be for the company". This company is one of the largest packing companies in the world and has 50,000 employees.

P. S. du Pont, Chairman of the Board of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., one of the largest manufacturers of chemicals and explosives in the world, with 36,000 employees, says that the fact that a man is able to purchase a home is an indication of his past ability and trustworthiness. He points out that while large employers of labor will not decline to employ a man because he does not own his home, the fact remains that the casual mention that he is making payments on a mortgage will favorably impress the man who is doing the hiring, because the home owner is good for the company. Discussing this question Mr. du Pont said:

Naturally the employee who owns a home in the vicinity of a factory or office where he works is more inclined to remain in his position and to work harder to retain it than a man who either rents a home or who has quarters in a boarding house. On this account corporations are naturally favorable to the class of employees who will purchase a home, for the fact that he is able to do this is an indication of past ability and truthworthiness.

But Mr. du Pont warned employers against encouraging workers to undertake home ownership just for the sake of becoming a home owner and points out that the employee involved in too heavy payments may not be an asset to a company. He says:

Employers should be careful not to state the home owning proposition in a way that will lead employees to invest in a home simply because it is desirable to become a home owner. Making such a purchase requiring payments beyond a man's means or finances or making purchase on value beyond what is reasonable, may involve an employee in a way that will make him less desirable.

The purchase of real estate must, therefore, be recommended guardedly, with certainty that the offerings are not only reasonable as to values but not too burdensome as to time of payment. I am not one who believes in indiscriminate real estate ventures.

F. Edson White, President of Armour & Company, commenting on this subject, says:

Steady, reliable employees who have pride in their jobs and a sense of responsibility are worth much to any business enterprise.

Ownership of a home is a great factor in developing reliability and responsibility in a man. The home owner feels that he is definitely a part of the community, he takes an active interest in it and can be counted on to boost it when opportunity presents itself.

It is regrettable that home owning carries with it in some places rather heavy penalties in the form of taxes.

I am hopeful that the time will come when there will be a premium on home ownership rather than a penalty. Certainly the home owner, on the average, has more incentive for good citizenship and good workmanship.

“OURTOWN” AND ITS HOUSING NEEDS

A FABLE FOR MAYORS

On an elm-shaded street in the thriving little city of “Ourtown” one fine day not many moons since there met for luncheon at the Progress Club the Mayor and the Chairman of the Planning Board.

Not without reason is “Ourtown” becoming proud of these two public servants: the one, a successful business man of broad civic vision who is applying constructive thought and able leadership to the job of a municipal executive; the other, a professor whose duties allow him time for some public work, and who regards the planning board chairmanship as something more than a merely honorary title.

The viands as befitted “Ourtown” were excellent and so were the recent golf scores of the two conferees; but they had something much more important to discuss than pudding or putting. “Just before leaving my desk,” said the Mayor, “I refreshed my memory as to the City Planning Enabling Act under which our Planning Board and the others in the state are functioning. You probably know its exact wording and recall that the main job of the Board as defined in the act is to ‘make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the town, particularly with respect to conditions injurious to the public health, or otherwise, in and about rented dwellings, and make plans for the development of the municipality, with special reference to the proper housing of its inhabitants.’

“And I spent some time last night in reading the Proceedings of the 1929 National Conference on City Planning. One of the subjects discussed at that meeting, as you doubtless know, was ‘Where City Planning and Housing Meet.’ Apparently, in many states planning boards need to be convinced that a thorough consideration of the housing problem is part of their job; but our legislature has by the wording of the enabling act removed all doubt on that subject in this state. I was especially interested, therefore, when you telephoned me that you wanted to make ‘The Housing Problem and the Municipal Government’ the subject of our luncheon conference today.”

“Yes, Mr. Mayor,” said the Chairman, “the more I have been studying this Planning Board job since you wished it on me a few weeks ago, the more I am convinced that the legislature made no mistake in emphasizing housing in the enabling act. If we are to make ‘Ourtown’

worthy of its name, we must get away from the self-complacency that is now hindering our progress. This is especially so in regard to the places in which many of our inhabitants are asked to live. So I have asked each member of the Planning Board to submit suggestions as to the activities for housing betterment which he believes this city needs. From these and from my own studies of the housing problem I have prepared a memorandum that I want to submit to you."

"That sounds interesting—and challenging," said the Mayor. "If you will read your memorandum aloud, maybe we can discuss it in a general way for a few minutes, and select two or three items from your list for special study or action in the near future."

"Before I do so," said the other, "I want to make it clear that I do not regard the housing problem as wholly a responsibility of the Planning Board or of the municipality as such. But I am certain that you and I have a great opportunity, through a wise combination of law and leadership, to make things happen in this town that will be of permanent benefit to the community. Well, here goes:

TWELVE HOUSING NEEDS OF "OURTOWN"

1. A reasonably accurate picture based on a careful survey, kept constantly up to date, of what our local housing conditions actually are.

2. A clear-cut assignment and acceptance of obligations for housing betterment between the municipal government on the one hand and individuals on the other.

3. Vigorous and effective action by civic and welfare organizations as spurs and guides to public and private activity.

4. The adoption and enforcement of building and housing codes that will require the highest structural and sanitary standards consistent with reasonable economy in construction costs.

5. The adoption and enforcement of a comprehensive zoning ordinance that will not allow anti-social or needlessly intensive use of the land in any part of the community.

6. Accurate assessment of real estate and more scientific use of the taxing power and of excess condemnation as incentives or aids to adequate and low-cost housing.

7. Adequate control of new real estate subdivisions.

8. Intelligent consideration by the city government of the effects on housing betterment and slum prevention of foresighted city planning, adequate transportation, and municipal improvements, such as street widening and paving, playground development and extensions to the sewerage system.

9. Maintenance of sanitary and safety standards including periodic inspection of multi-family buildings and education of tenants by the health and fire departments; and insistence on the rehabilitation or demolition of buildings when slum conditions begin to develop.

10. General acceptance by land owners, building developers and realtors of the fact that their activities have an inescapable relationship to the public welfare.

11. Greater willingness by men of means and financial institutions to invest liberally in large-scale, low-cost housing enterprises, thus helping to solve the housing problem for the lower economic groups.

12. Realization that adequate and wholesome housing for all of its members is of vital importance to the whole community, and that, if any families or individuals are unable to pay a fair return upon its cost, proper housing must nevertheless be provided for them. Any discrepancies between economic rent and ability to pay should be met by additions to income, not by reducing rents below an economic level. For those capable of self-support, the line of progress lies in raising wage-rates and in training for more productive labor; while those who are physically or mentally incapable of earning a living wage must be frankly accepted as charges upon the community.

"That's an imposing list," said the Mayor. "Obviously we can't tackle all twelve planks at once. What procedure do you suggest?"

"My thought, Mr. Mayor," replied the Planning Board Chairman, "is that there is a fine opportunity here to test out a pet theory of mine. I am convinced that in every city—'Ourtown' being no exception to the rule—there are men and women who would gladly respond to a request from the mayor to perform a definite, special service for their home town. Standing committees too often do little more than stand—or pass resolutions; but a special committee, carefully selected and appointed for a specific task possible of accomplishment within a reasonable time, may perform a tremendously worth-while service with little or no cost to the municipality.

"Why don't you as Mayor appoint a special housing committee, consisting of the members of the Planning Board and eight or ten others, and ask that committee to study this outline of 'Twelve Housing Needs of "Ourtown"' and submit to you within three months definite recommendations as to procedure in meeting these needs? Such a committee ought to have among its members some of our local leaders in business and finance; at least one or two men who have a practical knowledge of real estate and building problems, and leading representatives of our principal commercial, civic, women's and labor organizations.

"I am sure I can speak for the other members of the Planning Board in saying that we should welcome an opportunity to cooperate with such a representative group of our fellow citizens."

So favorably impressed was the city's chief executive with this suggestion, that within a month the "Mayor's Committee on Housing Betterment" had been appointed and had held its first meeting.

This story might go on to narrate how the Mayor's Committee on Housing through its subcommittees studied all of the 12 planks in the Planning Board's outline of housing needs. Many of these required much careful study with the aid of professional consultants, and a slow process of community education. Within its three months of life, however, the Committee submitted a report to the Mayor which is proving to be of outstanding value as a programme of work for the Planning Board and the Chamber of Commerce, Women's Club and other civic bodies interested in the local housing problem.

For many years prior to the events narrated in this tale, "Our-town" had been suffering from a fate the reverse of that of the proverbial dog with the bad name. "Ourtown's" fortune was a *good* name which had stuck to it without adequate cause. Its twentieth century boosters were still trading on the good start which had been given to the town by its eighteenth century founders. A spacious common and some elm-shaded streets had created a tradition which the present generation was doing little to maintain.

But the Planning Board with its new spirit of leadership and progress seems likely to raise the planning and housing standards of the community to such a degree that the name will no longer connote a tradition or a wish, but a vital, inspiring reality. Its Chamber of Commerce will soon be able to adopt as a truthful slogan—" 'Our-town'—Where Elms Grow and Slums Do Not".

HAROLD S. BUTTENHEIM
New York City

GOOD HOMES FOR NEGROES

Over 70% of the Negro population of our imperial city abides in Manhattan. We are crowded in upper Harlem today. Our housing situation is acute. In future it will be worse rather than better, unless housing projects are lifted out of the field of talk into that of actuality. Present restrictions upon foreign immigration have the indirect and altogether unexpected effect of continuously stimulating additional immigration here of persons of color from our agricultural South, even though immigration from the distressing economic situation in the British West Indies is reduced to the minimum.

It has recently been my business to talk intimately and in detail with a good many hundreds of persons of color who are now living in Harlem apartment houses. Just now I live in one myself. With extraordinary unanimity and vigor, these people complain against the housing conditions in which they find themselves enmeshed.

The absentee landlord is too often concerned only with his money

profits; and thanks also to go-getter real estate men, the rents have been boosted and boosted, higher and higher, year after year. I have found a special bitterness against the Negro real estate men who have shown pre-eminent adroitness in squeezing the orange; it is not, one may suppose, that these clever gentry have any animosity toward the orange—they simply hanker unconscionably for the juice! Rents have sometimes been increased 7 times in 5 years. Repairs of the most urgent nature have been either curtly ignored or delayed nonchalantly.

In the apartment houses the canny landlord is represented by his rent collector and the janitor, neither of whom is selected with any particular reference to actual serviceability to the tenants. In some cases the janitor cannot even speak the English language clearly enough to be understood. He has an Arabian Nights' trick of vanishing when needed. Grossly negligent management is characteristic.

HOW THE NEGRO IS NOW EXPLOITED

Sordid, many of the apartment houses are insolently unclean. Pell mell down the dumb-waiter shaft, garbage is dumped, a noisome practice and a very real danger to the health as well as to the mere olfactories of the occupants of the house. Rooms are vibrant with water bugs, roaches, mice, rats. The job would tax all the powers of the Pied Piper of Hamelin! Indeed the occupant can do little to protect himself. It is true, however, that if the tenants would act together more often, more intelligently and more resolutely, they could effectuate various reforms. Appeal to the overcrowded courts should be not the first but the last resort. To go to court means at least the loss of a whole day's work. Landlords use legal process time and again for purposes of intimidation.

The rent exploitation results in pernicious overcrowding of rooms without regard to breathing space, age, sex, relationship, morals. Sometimes even the bath room is used to sleep in—two individuals taking turns. Compelled to meet the increasing exactions of the hungry landlord, the tenant is often constrained against his judgment and his will to expose his own family to all the evils and dangers of the indiscriminate lodger system—or lack of system. "Rent parties" in many instances seem almost unavoidable, with all their liquid boisterousness, if the exorbitant rent is to be paid. It is the conditions that are censurable rather than the victimized individuals.

There is, of course, practically no selection or classification of tenants. Anybody is acceptable who can and will pay the rent—other test there is none. And a family of sound Christian character finds itself

across the narrow dark hall from a family which is obnoxious, if not vicious. The dope fiend lives under this dispensation cheek by jowl with the deacon. With the mothers away at work, the children and youth of the exemplary family are exposed hourly to evil example and suggestion. The whole atmosphere is alive with noxious moral bacteria.

On the other hand, the family earning small wages that attempts to purchase a home in this nice little, tight little island of Manhattan, finds in general that the down payment is much too large for its resources, that the multiplicity of mortgages is not only disconcerting but dangerous, that the brokerages are extortionate, that the property is greatly over-valued. Moreover, Manhattan is so congested that it is far more economical as well as convenient for any family to live in an apartment house than in a private dwelling. Even Judge Gary sold his Fifth Avenue mansion to live in an apartment house.

If the home-buyer turns to the so-called "cooperative" apartments, he finds them in many cases a delusion and a snare. Frequently they are greatly over-capitalized and \$500 buys only \$200 worth of apartment. Moreover, the satisfactory tenant often finds himself carrying the load of the unsatisfactory. Finally, the management is in many cases not discernibly better than the management in other apartment houses. There are obnoxious neighbors aplenty. Besides, the cooperative apartment houses are in architectural design as unsatisfactory as the others, the provision for sunlight and fresh air being most inadequate. For children and adults, one remove from rural life, the brick walls and concrete are a mighty poor substitute for Nature.

MODEL HOMES FOR NEGROES NOW AVAILABLE

But now have come the spacious Garden Apartments, the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments, erected by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in the block bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues, 149th and 150th Streets. Two-rooms deep, the buildings are set around the outside of a large rectangle, the inside being devoted to gardens. Every room has access to abundant sunlight and fresh air. Said a sage little boy to me, "The best medicine man of all is old Doc. Sunlight!" In the center of the gardens, which stretch from Seventh to Eighth Avenue, is a play space where the little children may enjoy wholesome recreation under ideal conditions. They even have a dormitory of their own. What better precaution against juvenile delinquency!

These beautiful buildings were designed by an able architect, Andrew J. Thomas. The materials, bought most economically, are

all of excellent quality. The structures have been put up with great care in order that they may be sound and durable. Earnest effort was made to utilize Negro labor as far as practicable. No meretricious ornamentation has been used to attract and delude the prospective purchaser. Everything is in perfect taste, solid and substantial. This entire project illustrates the truism that large-scale operations are the most economical.

The apartments comprise 3 rooms; 3 and a half—the half being the dining bay which enables the family to dispense with using a whole room for dining purposes or with the necessity of resorting to the living room 4, 4 and a half, 5, 6, and 7. Each type of room in any suite is substantially like the same type of room in any other suite. Altogether, the rooms are regarded by competent critics as representing advanced practice in modern apartment house architecture; they are comfortable and reasonably spacious, as well as genuinely attractive.

A much rouged visitor to the temporary offices of the Dunbar Apartments was sadly upset to learn that the apartments do not contain roof gardens. I was sorry but explained that they do not contain elevators either; elevators would increase the cost unduly. Consequently a sixth floor suite of rooms is not worth as much as a second floor suite, since the tenant must be his own elevator. But the rooms have been valued with precision, so that the second and third floors represent the peak price in any building, the first floor being substantially lower, and the fourth, fifth, and sixth floors being graduated downward in price until the sixth is lowest of all. A corner suite is given a higher sale price, than one inside.

THE TENANTS OWN THEIR HOMES

These apartments are for sale on the following terms: \$50 cash down per room and, according to location, from \$11.50 per room per month to \$17.50. The monthly payment is applied, first, to the payment of interest upon the deferred payments; second, to the upkeep of the apartment—a term which includes taxes, fire insurance, hot water, heating, and janitor service; and third, to the reduction of the principal sum. Month after month, the proportion of the payment applicable to reducing the principal, will be larger and larger than the preceding month. This means that in appreciably less than 30 years the purchaser who meets these minimum requirements, will own his apartment without encumbrance of any kind—just as if it were a house and lot. Of course, it is to the interest of the purchaser to pay as much upon the principal as possible, thus reducing the amount of interest upon

deferred payments. Interest is a great eater. And the Corporation will permit additional payments upon the principal sum to be made at any time.

This apartment house project as a whole is being offered to Negro Harlem at cost, the interest charge being $5\frac{1}{2}\%$ with no brokerage whatever. Land and buildings are bound to advance in value steadily and indefinitely; they have, indeed, advanced already by at least \$300,000, but the cost to the purchaser has not been increased. What better investment for Negro Harlem today?

The purchaser of a suite of rooms in these community houses who finds himself compelled for any reason to dispose of his equity, may, I repeat, do so through the instrumentality of the Corporation, receiving back dollar for dollar—all that he has invested in the principal. No speculation is possible.

Harlem newspapers are sometimes criticised for featuring crime but how can they avoid it when crime is rampant? Robberies, for illustration, are being constantly committed in the various apartment houses because there is no special or adequate provision for safeguarding the apartments when the occupiers happen to be out. In a recent instance, when the family was away, a truck stopped deliberately at the front door in broad daylight, and the men proceeded in cool, workmanlike fashion to load upon it all the furniture in the apartment—which happened to be brand new. And the robbers got away scot free. The new furniture never came back. But in the Dunbar apartments every possible precaution is taken to safeguard people and property. The members of the janitorial staff have been carefully selected, and some have been made special officers of the Police Department. At every hour of the day and night an ample force is on duty. So, the first floor and the sixth are every whit as safe as the second and third floors.

SELECTING ONE'S NEIGHBORS

Be it remembered that applicants for the Dunbar Apartments have been selected for final approval by the Committee of Management with the utmost care. Every applicant submits at least three dependable references, and in every case the reference is actually looked up. The sporting fraternity, daughters of joy, the criminal element are not wanted, and in fact will not be tolerated. Families of exemplary habit and character are sought, those that sincerely desire to secure and help maintain a wholesome environment in which to live and are seriously ambitious to own their own homes. Children are not necessary and they are no bar.

An efficient management for the apartments is practically guaranteed for a period of 20 years by the provisions of the lease contract. During this time, the preferred stock which alone has voting power, will remain in the hands of Mr. Rockefeller. It is thought that this cooperative community of approximately 2000 persons will in 20 years become so habituated to the advantages of scientific management that thereafter it will tolerate nothing else.

The other morning one of our tenant-owners who had just moved into her new home did a perfectly dreadful thing. The way the Management came to learn about it was this: Another tenant-owner, Mrs. B, came rushing into the office to call attention to the fact. Immediately putting on my overcoat and starting toward the door, I was met by another, Mrs. X, who had come to call imperative attention to the same fact. As I neared the corner of Seventh Avenue and 149th Street, Mr. G, still another tenant-owner, stopped me peremptorily in reference to the same matter, emphasizing not without eloquence my instant responsibility. But, before I reached the apartment in question, the nuisance had abated; no scintilla of evidence was left. I confess I was so unreasonable as to be disappointed; subconsciously I had been rather hoping to catch the culprit *flagrante delictu*. What was it all about, you ask? Well, the errant housewife, not having received her ice on time, had set a milk bottle—think of it—a whole milk bottle, on the window sill. The point is that Mrs. B and Mrs. X and Mr. G were immensely exercised lest by this grave act the beauty of our community houses be impaired and our standards of order and decency lowered. Gratifying, you say? I say *significant*.

THE COMMUNITY VALUE

Such a select community can and will set Negro Harlem a high example of economic cooperation. The individual consumer is impotent. But 2000 consumers, if and when organized under intelligent leadership, can accomplish a very great deal. Such action on the part of this community will put more than 100 cents in every family's dollar. It will constitute a powerful example and beneficent incentive. What more vital to the progressive well-being of our Harlem?

We are developing a model community of color. Already a fine spirit of neighborliness, most extraordinary in the New York of today, pervades it through and through. And the future has not yet spoken. The project has immense significance not only for New York City and state, but for the nation.

It is profoundly gratifying that this housing project has been crowned with the magic name of Paul Laurence Dunbar. For, who so

memorably as he has embodied the characteristic charm and spirit and genius of the Negro people?

Mr. Rockefeller is not pampering Negro Harlem with his largess. The Dunbar cooperators are paying for what they get. And they are getting what they pay for. But, he is demonstrating that the most disadvantaged element in the American population can be comfortably—yes, beautifully housed, and yet the capitalist will have a good, stable investment.

The significance of this project can hardly be overestimated in connection (1) with its possibilities for Americans of African descent to maintain sound and high standards of living, (2) with the promotion of wholesome inter-racial relationships, and (3) with the advancement of modern housing for the masses of the people.

ROSCOE CONKLING BRUCE

Resident Manager

Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments, N. Y. C.

HELPING THE WORKING GIRL

That the working girl who has to make her way in New York is not left to fight her rather unequal battle unaided, is evidenced by a statement recently issued by the Association to Promote Proper Housing for Girls, of which Miss Cornelia Marshall is the able and enthusiastic President. They point out that the young woman of 17 and up can often be placed at a Girls' Club, which is a place with a resident House Mother in charge, offering room and board at moderate rates to the business or professional young woman. Some dormitory rooms can be had even in these days of high cost of living, particularly in clubs, for the youngest girls at less than \$8 a week, but the amount of this accommodation is very limited and in most cases such places do not take in students. A girl must count on paying at least \$12 to \$18 a week for a single room and 2 meals in such a club.

For the girl who wants to do her own cooking, or at least some of it, there are now 3 apartment buildings in New York City, especially designed for this group. The first was opened some years ago by the Y. W. C. A. The other two, the "Irvin" and the "Virginia," both under the auspices of the New York League of Girls' Clubs, have been opened during the last 3 years. These are attractively furnished in bed-living room style and apartments may be taken on a lease or not, as may be desired. Rooms in these 2-room to 5-room apartments range in price from \$9 a week to \$14 or \$15 a week.

Or, the young woman wage earner may find excellent accommodations in some of the hotels especially built for women. There are now 7 such hotels in New York City devoted entirely to this purpose, not to mention many others which reserve whole floors or sections for women. Most of these are quite near the center of activities. Three of the hotels for women are older ones opened some years ago, but four of them are quite recent. In the older hotels rooms may be had for \$12 a week and up, but in the newer ones it is difficult to get rooms for much less than \$14 or \$15 a week.

There are still a few rooming houses and boarding houses left in the city, that is in the old city of New York, in Manhattan. In the case of the boarding houses, they exist because of a more or less permanent clientele, and seldom can one find a place in one of these for less than \$18 a week. Rooming houses, too, are apt to be very centrally located, high class, well kept places where rooms rent for \$10 a week and up; or else very plain houses lacking something perhaps in the ordinary comforts of sufficient heat, hot water and light, but it is in these that the \$5 and even \$4 a week room can still be found.

The more attractive and comfortable rooms for girls and women the Association points out are to be had in apartments with other business women or with private families. In this way the extra room of an apartment is made to help out with the rent and often supplies a good home at \$6, \$7 or \$8 a week and up, sometimes with the privilege of using the kitchen or an electric grill.

From all of which it will be seen that the young woman wage earner having to make her way alone in a great city like New York is not without substantial help in opportunity to live under decent conditions while she is achieving her career.

PRESENT FASHIONS IN HOMES

Most people agree that present home design is improving steadily. Many forces are helping to keep us headed right. The biggest handicap is an old one that has its parallel in many other industries. Time and again real estate men and builders have told us that it too often happens that a new house that sells easily is not the best one to buy or to live in. That situation is not easy to remedy, for the public has to be educated in order to make much advancement. We are doing well when we can see real progress in the space of five years.

Men are lured by what seems attractive to make important decisions and live to regret their choice when they bump into the hard reality of things as they are. We could draw an analogy from politics

where the complaint has been for 2500 years that the high sounding demagogue who promises much is too often elected to public office over his worthier and more able opponent. But it is enough for us to agree that many families would be better satisfied with their houses if they used more discrimination in picking out good ones, and did not "fall" for showy features—or, in effect, demand them even when they may have been provided at the expense of items they later find they really need, or of shoddy structures that quickly deteriorate and multiply the owner's repair bills.

It is easy to be overcritical of other people's tastes, and I do not want to decry, much less neglect, the fact that human beings do a lot of things for the sake of appearances. People of real character do go to great pains to maintain appearances and all of us have whims that we like to indulge. In order to build houses and to sell them in a competitive market such human qualities have to be taken into account. The problem of quality confronts many other industries, and I think we may well be encouraged because the number of houses erected that are distinctly faulty in construction seems to have diminished considerably during the past six years.

The situation presents all the elements of a drama. The characters include the operative or speculative builder; the architect, together with many smaller parts for others who design, or contribute to designing, houses; manufacturers of building materials and equipment that go into the house; and the homebuyers. These persons of the drama are all subject to the many currents of our modern world.

WHAT ARE THE TRENDS?

I cannot hope to pose as an expert on detailed matters of style or sales appeal. I cannot tell how the last \$150 to be spent on a house to sell at \$5950 might best be divided among inlaid flooring, a fireplace that has no chimney, tile on the bathroom walls, a colored kitchen sink, an electric button that opens the back cellar door from the kitchen, hand-forged hardware for the front door, and dozens of other items that are used in all sorts of combinations to help create individuality.

Getting down to the elements of design we find that the designer is now more often able to start with a good setting for the house. The efforts of realtors to promote good subdivision layout and city planning, and the general movement for better planning are bearing fruit. Zoning and deed restrictions are all helping to maintain the character of residential neighborhoods. This all gives an incentive to better architecture, and designers assume a longer life for houses and emphasize durability at many points.

The automobile—besides permitting residences to spread out into suburban areas served by private cars and bus lines in locations and in a way that would not have been possible if we still had to depend on horses and street and steam railways—has affected the size, shape and features of the lot and of the house.

In Washington, for example, the proportion of row houses being put up is much smaller since the war than before. New residential building consists more of apartments and of detached houses.

THE PIAZZA DISAPPEARING

The front porch—a more or less distinctive American institution—is rapidly going out of style. Fewer and fewer people care to watch endless streams of passing motor cars, and the rear of the house is coming more and more into its own. Alleys, which muster but few defenders, are becoming passé; although many of them have already been laid out in unbuilt territory and some cities still cling to them tenaciously. More attention is paid to the appearance of the backs of houses and designers are called upon to provide for keeping such things as ash cans out of sight.

It is only during the past few years that the designer has had to consider the fact that practically every owner will want a place on his lot to house one or more motor cars. The built-in garage has worked its way down from the more expensive houses into the medium priced field. On streets where there is any considerable amount of automobile traffic and where garages are built-in or attached to the houses, families naturally want to live more and more at the back of the house. A sun parlor at the rear has become fairly common and the rear living room is no longer a curiosity.

In several large developments near New York, as well as in Trenton, Flint, and Milwaukee houses are to be found in the lower price ranges where no garage is provided; that being left to the owner to build when and as he sees fit. The garage itself is coming more and more to be a fairly substantial, presentable structure.

In row houses the built-in basement garage seems to be a prerequisite in Philadelphia and San Francisco, but it was found in less than half the houses visited in Washington and Baltimore in the Department of Commerce's recent Survey. Local customs or practices governing block and lot sizes—carried over from before the days of the automobile—seem to account for the difference.

Modern features that contribute to saving time and labor in house-keeping, and which make for health and comfort, have come to be demanded in most new houses, and absorb a considerable part of the

cost of the house. This has created a pressure to cut down on the cubical contents, and has meant somewhat smaller room sizes, lower ceiling heights and greater attention to economical arrangement of space. The process has its limits and there are some evidences of a re-action. People themselves are no smaller; in fact, their average dimensions are increasing. Where they can afford more space without too much extra labor for housekeeping they are glad to have it.

Some prophets have foretold the passing of the dining room in the small house, arguing that being used only two or three times a day it was the most expensive space in the house. A good breakfast nook and well planned arrangements for serving meals at one end of an enlarged living room, so they said, would suffice; but there is no proof yet that they were right. In our survey we found many small houses where a breakfast nook was added, but almost none where the dining room was omitted.

ROOM SIZES

In the houses visited kitchens were more nearly alike in size than any other room. Most of them contained about 100 square feet, with the width about three-quarters of the length, so that 8 feet 10 inches by 11 feet 8 inches would be typical. Living rooms from 11 to 15 feet wide and 15 to 22 feet long, with the width commonly about two-thirds the length, were most frequent. These figures are based on houses mostly of 5 or 6 rooms, and represent the actual practice—which may or may not be the best—and variations are frequent. Dining rooms tend to be more nearly square, with about half again as large an area as the kitchens. Bedroom sizes run distinctly larger in two-story than in one-story houses. The owner's bedroom in many two-story houses is over the living room and of about the same size.

Ceiling heights are usually greater in the south than in the north—presumably because they are more comfortable in warmer climates—and on account of custom. In houses above the lowest price range there is an increasing tendency to obtain a higher ceiling in the living room by keeping the floor one or two steps lower than the remainder of the house.

Provision of a fireplace, which is found in a large majority of cases, whether it is for logs, gas or electricity, shows that the home has not altogether surrendered as a place for social life. The radio—for which built in outlets are sometimes provided—is doing its part to keep people at home, and may have some connection with the fairly frequent provision of sun parlors and sun porches, which can be used as a second down-stairs living room, or as a porch, according to the

weather. What such an addition can mean in the life of a family containing young people is hard to over-estimate. It can determine whether or not the parents have the opportunity to know their children's friends, and it can develop individuality in children, and tone up the entire atmosphere of the home. It permits members of the family to take or leave the radio programme, as they happen to wish, at any particular time.

THE MAGIC OF ELECTRICITY

One important group of items depends on utilities, the roots of the house. In new subdivisions gas and electricity are both common, but where there is only one it is more apt to be electricity. I need not emphasize the growing part that electricity is playing in the home—of its use for lighting, for electric irons, toasters, refrigeration, operation of vacuum cleaners and washing machines, and most recently for heating by means of large hot water storage tanks which consume current provided at special rates during the hours after midnight when other power requirements are at a minimum. All this involves more expensive wiring, and additional electric outlets, and leaves less of the owners' dollar for the structure of the house itself. Gas is very general for cooking and for heating hot water, is used for space heaters, and is being developed as a fuel for furnaces, and for refrigeration.

THE JOYS OF SATURDAY NIGHT

The bathroom is one of the most conspicuous features of many new small houses. I recall one in a row house that sold for less than \$6,000. Although small, the bathroom looked fit at least for a millionaire screen star, with its floor of black and white tile, buff colored tile wainscoting, special wallpaper showing sea scenes, and the built-in bathtub with shower attachment in a kind of alcove. The bathtub on legs is going out of style even in the lower-priced new houses. The types replacing it have practical as well as aesthetic advantages, because they have no space underneath to be kept clean; and with the saving in floor covering the total cost of the bathroom may be only slightly greater. Of the houses covered in our survey three-fourths had tile floors in the bathroom, and about one-half tile wainscoting.

Real advance in the heating of houses has been made through organized efforts to study the problem scientifically and work out tables which make an inadequate installation well-nigh inexcusable. The

use of more expensive fuels has created a greater incentive to use adequate weatherstripping and heat insulation.

Types of floor covering have been in evolution ever since the passing of the old-fashioned carpet. Hardwood floors downstairs and a good grade of matched flooring upstairs are usual, with linoleum common in the kitchen. These types help to make dusting easy. Variations are frequent, and many of the competitive floorings strive for use in special parts of the house, such as tile in the entrance hallway.

COLOR

One of the most important and recent trends to have a marked effect is the increasing vogue for color. This has a good and highly commendable side; but it also has its dangers. If a man paints his house or roof the wrong color, he can easily repaint them. Changing the color of certain materials, however, is impossible without actual replacement.

MATERIALS

None of us can escape the greatly intensified competition between the manufacturers of building materials and equipment—a competition forcibly expressed in national advertising. Durability against rust and decay, protection against cracks and leaks, fire-resistive properties, sanitary qualities, heat insulation, appearance—all these and many other properties are constantly stressed in appeals to the public.

It is impossible to give a quantitative estimate of the number of houses built of different basic materials. Brick veneer has gained in many localities. In some places it has cut into straight frame construction, while in others it gains by displacing solid brick. This seems to be the case particularly in some Southern cities where brick walls were used without furring, and in which cases the brick veneer is preferred as giving less trouble from damp plaster.

The intergroup competition not only affects the demands of owners, but has resulted in research into the best methods of using the different materials such as lumber, brick, and cement. Hence, a better collection of information on the engineering side of construction is available to designers and builders.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Most of the commercially built houses, at least in the larger cities, include many of the modern improvements. The people for whom

space is the first requisite apparently buy or rent old houses. In industrial housing projects, like those in southern mill towns, considerable numbers of houses are erected without all the modern features. An increasing proportion of such houses in North Carolina, however, where a study has recently been made, have running water and electricity.

In some rapidly growing communities, such as Oklahoma City and Flint, we found that houses are being built at a lower price than in most of the other cities, probably because there is not so great a supply of second-hand houses to meet the needs of families in low income groups. After the war and up to 1923 there were in some cities subdivisions in which families started out living in garages or shacks, with the expectation of building real houses later. That situation seems to have passed. In most cities probably fewer really small houses, say of 3 or 4 rooms, are being built than before the War. The family that can compress itself into a small space apparently doubles up with another, goes into a multifamily structure, or provides otherwise for itself.

TYPES OF LOW PRICED HOUSES

The lowest priced houses being built in quantity in the larger cities today are of 5 and 6 rooms, with 1-story construction apparently predominating for the 5-room, and 2-story for the 6-room size. The 6-room, 2-story house is favored more in eastern cities, whereas, in cities of the middle and far west, the 5-room bungalow is in the lead in the lowest priced group. In the latter cities, however, the 2-story house usually has 6 rooms. The popularity of bungalows in the lowest priced class of detached dwellings seems to continue in spite of the arguments of those who maintain that a family gets more for its money in a 2-story house than in a single-story dwelling. There must be a catch somewhere: whether this is due to wrong assumptions as to comparative costs, custom, convenience for housework, or a reflection of the aesthetic tastes of owners, or something else, I do not know.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

American domestic architecture is on the mend. The more expensive houses are usually designed by architects who specialize in that kind of work, and are acknowledged to be the best in the world. More operative builders appreciate the importance of good architectural service and employ architects on their staff or as consultants. By means of deed restrictions and other forms of control or influence, they obtain architectural harmony in neighborhoods.

The Architects' Small House Service Bureau with its regional divisions—an offshoot of the American Institute of Architects—has done a great deal to set higher standards in the small house field. Its work, together with that of material manufacturers and some of the commercial plan services, has interested more architects in the design of small houses—a specialty in itself—and this has all been encouraged by the wider publication and use of stock plans. Building trade papers and homebuilding periodicals, which have had a striking increase in circulation during the past few years, and the homebuilding pages of newspapers, have done much splendid work in encouraging interest in good design and in cultivating public taste. Fine work has been done also by various local groups such as the Community Arts Association in Santa Barbara, and the bodies which encourage adherence to historic traditions in some eastern towns.

Particular styles come and have their vogue and give way to others in the construction of new houses in various cities. English and pseudo-English houses and steeper roof slopes than formerly are now popular in many parts of the country, but many southern and western cities favor Spanish and Italian types.

Probably more small houses of good architecture are being put up now than for a century past. In a desire to please prospective owners, efforts to present something out of the ordinary have been directed more towards adaptations of historic and provincial styles than to the pure exercise of the imagination which produced the so-called gingerbread ornamentation and other features of our lamented architectural Dark Ages, which still cast their shadows among us.

HEALTH VALUES STILL NOT APPRECIATED

Certain elements of house design are but little understood. Take ventilation, for example. We can hardly escape reading medical opinions on the value of raisins, yeast, spinach, cigarettes and sweets, or artful descriptions of the value of beds, springs and mattresses that assure healthful slumber. But discussions of the value of a quiet, well ventilated home are conspicuously absent in the popular prints. May we look forward to the day when physicians' views on the value of these items are given currency? If it be the mode of the moment, why for that matter should not psychotherapists' views on the value of an owned home be sought and published?

Countless families have had it impressed on them by arguments that a refrigerator should maintain a temperature of about 45 degrees rather than 55 degrees, yet how many as "prospects" ask if on a June

evening the temperature in a house will be 72, as it could be if the house were properly insulated and ventilated, when it may actually show 82 degrees—a temperature which with the stuffiness likely to go with it makes comfortable sleep impossible for many persons? There are bedrooms where you can't sleep much after sun-up on a summer morning because the sun striking the side of the house makes it like a hothouse. I have yet to learn of temperatures being taken in living rooms and bedrooms in the summer time in differently constructed houses in the same neighborhood to find out what some of the variations are, and how houses may be kept cooler in the summer. Few people seem aware that besides heat insulation, orientation, room proportions, and types, sizes and placement of windows are all important.

WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS

What does a family want in a house? Usually it wants to have it comfortable, cleanly and attractive to live in—and at least presentable as to looks—both inside and out. There never has been a perfect house, even where the owner's funds were unlimited; and in choosing a house the owner has to do the best he can in the way of obtaining desirable features and avoiding undesirable ones. In order to do well he ought to be well educated and he ought to exercise calm, dispassionate judgment. There is no doubt that most Americans are better judges of motor cars than of houses. If they bought motor cars the same way that many do houses, we would find them selecting cars on the basis of their upholstery without taking a ride in them or inquiring about their gas consumption or asking the man who owns one.

Notwithstanding this, the American people have become much better informed during the past few years as to the points of a good house. There has been a tremendous increase in home building periodicals and some of the home building pages of the newspapers are well conducted. The manufacturers of many items that enter into a home and its equipment have done a splendid job in conveying essential facts. But the fact remains that a large proportion of home buyers are full of prejudices and half-baked ideas of what they want. Some to be sure are careless or indifferent and do not make a systematic effort to size up the relative merits and demerits of different houses.

For a large proportion of families, buying a home is such a momentous step that it becomes a distinctly emotional experience; and a good many of them, when they are in real need of having someone at hand with the "hose of common sense" to play on their fiery enthusiasm, choose the particular house they do because of some one, two or three

features that especially attract them. It is no wonder, then, that the showy house often wins out over its neighbor, which is really designed and built to wear well in every sense of the term—including appearance and general attractiveness.

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1,000 GARDEN CITIES

On the occasion of the inauguration of the new Chamber of Commerce at Welwyn Garden City last July Sir Basil Blackett, K. C. B., K. S. C. I., urged the building of 1,000 Garden Cities like Welwyn. On this occasion he said in part:

The building of 1,000 Welwyn Garden Cities should be the ideal of our reformers. There are 36 million acres in England and Wales which are sparsely inhabited. Within the Home Counties alone there are 4,000 square miles of rural areas with a population of only 1 person to 3 acres. Within this territory many sites are available. Reasonable concentration of population within Garden Cities will save the countryside from indiscriminate defacement. The older cities cannot begin re-development till there is some relaxation of the pressure to which they will remain subject so long as the problem of urban decentralisation is not boldly faced. Decentralisation and reconstruction will mean no loss in rateable value or in power or in prestige. There is not a town in the British Isles which does not contain areas which are uneconomically used and are a blot on the fair name of the town and a cause of needless waste of human life and of the rate payer's money.

Nor will agriculture suffer by the wise urbanisation of selected rural districts on garden city lines. The coming of Welwyn Garden City has raised the value of the surrounding agricultural land and has led to intensive cultivation in providing a market for the farmers' eggs and butter and the market gardeners' produce.

Welwyn Garden City started life only in 1920. It was designed to become a complete self-contained town of 50,000 inhabitants, protected for all time against overcrowding and congestion, well balanced with its own selected manufacturing industries, limited to the number suitable for a population of 50,000. Under unified control and the wise guidance of enlightened leaders, with the courage to take and keep the lead, with the imagination to grasp the picture as a whole and the vision to see the future in the present, Welwyn Garden City has already, in less than 10 years, justified the faith of its founders, and serves already as an example and an inspiration for men and women of good will to follow up and down the length and breadth of old England.

And further:

Less than 10 years ago this area of 4 square miles was purely agricultural. Though only 20 miles from London, it was sparsely inhabited and difficult of access. Today we look around us upon a flourishing and rapidly growing city, provided with all the services demanded by modern civilisation, one of the most important and virile communities in the Home Counties. The new Barnet by-pass and a new railway station on the main line give it easy access to London and the North Roads, electricity, gas, main drainage, water supply—all the physical needs have been satisfied on an economic basis. A population of 7,500 occupies some 2,000 houses, and plans have been carefully prepared in advance for a population of 50,000. Here are churches, chapels, halls, theatre, recreation grounds, restaurants, places of amusement. The industrial development has been remarkable.

There are many indications that the Garden City idea is beginning to find wide adherence throughout England. Commenting on this meeting, a writer in *The Spectator* agitates the establishment of 5,000 Garden Cities and strangely enough gives as his reason for being converted to this idea which repelled him at first—the ugly and unfortunate “ribbon” development which has been going on in England in recent years and with its accompaniment of “bungaloid” growth, ruining the English countryside. Commenting on this aspect of the situation, this writer said:

Five thousand Garden Cities would do less harm than the unsightly, unhealthy, unmanageable, unsocial lines or blots of temporary “mendacities” (in Carlyle’s phrase) that writhe along the roads or pop up like Jacks-in-the-box among rural scenes. Great centralised factories, encircled by so-called living houses, are a frank abomination, killing the soul of the worker and defeating all mechanical palliatives. Hope for the future lies in the decentralised factory, now made easy by the spread of electric light and power. Of that there can be no question whatever.

This cardinal fact has converted me—if I may speak personally—to the Garden City idea. It will slough its unhappy phraseology, its irritating mannerisms. It will straighten out its cranks and laugh at its own false enthusiasms and parochial prides, as it becomes less exceptional and more normal. It will be less self-consciously communal. The industrial revolution which spoilt our towns and much of our country has been followed by a motor revolution which is congesting the towns and “uglifying” the country. We must have industries and we want as many country dwellers as possible. The one and only positive, concrete, practical remedy for the existing evils which threaten to destroy “this England” is the Garden City, in which decentralised factories are built on such a plan that their presence does not destroy either the health of the workers or the pleasantness of social life in their neighborhood. Nightingales continue to sing near the Welwyn bowling green.

It would be strange indeed if the hated "ribbon" development and "bungalowoid" growth which in recent years have been "uglifying" the English landscape should be a blessing in disguise and prove the means of spreading Garden Cities throughout England.

A NATION-WIDE HOME BUILDING PLAN

A nation-wide home financing and building plan involving the construction during the present year of \$100,000,000 in homes for the small investor has been undertaken by Sears, Roebuck & Company. This Company has opened 48 offices in 21 states and the District of Columbia, from which the financing and building of more than 3,000 houses will be supervised for individual home seekers this year. Its home building department has for some years past been active in the sale of building materials and so called "ready-cut" house assembled by the owners.

Now the company not only will offer an extension of the time-payment plan on loans up to 75% of the valuation at 6% interest, but will be the actual builder of the houses so financed. There will be a staff of building superintendents who will supervise construction as general contractors. Under the plan that the company has adopted the home seeker will be able to build and pay off his mortgage in monthly installments like rent at as low a monthly payment as \$25 extending through a period of 15 years if desired. The Company will lend funds up to \$3 for every dollar invested by the owner on the house and lot, and the house can be of any architectural style the owner wishes, costing anywhere from \$2,000 to \$25,000. It is estimated that installments will range from about \$8.40 to \$1,000 a month, depending upon the character of the home.

The company has been led to the adoption of this long-term installment method of paying for a home by the success of similar methods in the automobile, furniture and radio industries, in the sale of electric and gas appliances and many other commodities which have made home life in America more pleasant and have removed many of the burdens of housework.

Before putting the plan into operation the company has carried on experiments in 6 cities during the past 8 months with its financing and construction programme, testing it out in practice before adopting it on a nation-wide scale.

It is now organized and prepared to supply all the material and equipment necessary to build any architectural style of brick, frame or stucco house costing from \$2,000 to \$25,000 in districts adjacent to the

48 newly opened home building division offices. The company states that it believes it can save owners from \$500 to \$2500 on their home building projects under their plan, with 15 years in which to pay for the cost of the home. During the last 6 months of last year, the company built 290 houses experimentally under the new plan in widely separated sections of the country but within the geographical area where 75% of all housing construction is done. In the houses thus built they effected savings of 10 to 25%, using the best materials and equipment.

A word as to how the scheme operates. Lumber will be cut at the mill and marked for assembling at the building site according to the architect's specifications, similar to the method employed in the steel mills which has simplified the erection of skyscrapers in large cities. It is estimated that this method alone will save from 20 to 40% of the carpentry labor bills.

The company's architect has prepared 100 designs from which the home builder may make selections, but if he so chooses he may employ his own architect or submit his own sketches to the company's architect to complete the detailed plans. Fifty model homes will be erected by the company this spring in leading cities throughout the country and opened to the public for inspection. In addition to the new home building the company will supply materials and finance the remodelling of old houses and modernize them for more healthful living.

One of the first houses constructed under this scheme has recently been completed at North Plainfield, New Jersey at a cost of \$7,000. The owner of this house is now beginning paying off his first mortgage loan made by the company over a period of 14 years and 8 months at the rate of \$50.64 a month. In completing this house only the 5 primary rooms and the bath on the first floor have been finished off. The 3 rooms on the second floor have not been completed but can be finished by the owner at any time that they may be required. With the use of brick, stone and stucco in the exterior walls this house can be built within the metropolitan district of New York and paid for in monthly payments running over a period of 176 months, for as low as from \$45 to \$65 per month—the amount of each monthly payment—depending upon whether or not the owner wishes to finish off the 8 rooms at the time of construction or to finish off part of them later.

It would seem as if a very great public service would be rendered the country by this plan of applying mass production to the building of homes. It will be watched with the keenest interest. If high standards of quality of materials and workmanship are maintained, it will undoubtedly perform a very great service.

THE COUNTRY'S HOUSING NEEDS

A normal ratio between supply and demand for single-family dwellings is one of the significant facts brought to light by the semi-annual survey of the real estate market completed the beginning of this year by the National Association of Real Estate Boards, covering 411 cities and reporting information gathered by local real estate boards in those cities. A normal or adequate supply of single-family dwellings was reported by 62% of the cities included in the survey; 19% of these reported a shortage in this class of buildings and a further 19% reported overbuilding. When it comes to apartment houses, 55% of the cities covered by the survey reported a normal supply of apartments, 27% reported a shortage and 18% reported that there was over-building in this class of building.

The following table shows the facts with regard to single-family dwellings and apartments in the various geographical areas of the country as well as in cities of certain sizes, grouped as cities of under 25,000 population and from that amount up to 500,000.

PERCENTAGE OF CITIES REPORTING OVERBUILDING, NORMAL SUPPLY OR SHORTAGE IN SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS AND APARTMENTS AS COMPARED WITH NOVEMBER, 1928.

Section and Size of City	Single Family Dwellings			Apartments		
	Over- built	Nor- mal	Short- age	Over- built	Nor- mal	Short- age
Totals for U. S. and Canada....	19	62	19	18	55	27
New England.....	30	48	22	32	41	27
Middle Atlantic.....	25	70	5	24	57	19
South Atlantic.....	19	56	25	25	58	17
East North Central.....	20	70	10	14	55	31
West North Central.....	11	56	33	11	61	28
East South Central.....	35	50	15	16	63	21
West South Central.....	4	73	23	22	52	26
Mountain	25	38	37	5	50	45
Pacific	9	59	32	10	52	38
Canada	---	100	---	---	100	---
Over 500,000.....	31	62	7	64	36	---
200,000 to 500,000.....	25	62	13	28	72	---
100,000 to 200,000.....	24	70	6	40	51	9
25,000 to 100,000.....	21	64	15	18	62	20
Under 25,000.....	17	57	26	10	53	37
District and Co. Boards.....	10	66	24	11	46	43

These figures take on added significance in connection with a statement issued recently by Edward Eyre Hunt, Secretary of the President's Conference on Unemployment. Mr. Hunt stated that while the annual increase in population has become much more nearly stabilized in recent years, he estimates that the country requires an annual addition of 400,000 homes, pointing out that the net loss of the farm population to cities and towns has resulted in an unusual demand for urban dwellings.

The situation with regard to rents as reported by the Real Estate Board's Semi-annual Survey, showed that rents of single family dwell-

ings were higher than they were a year ago in 17% of the cities; they were the same or constant in 51%; and lower in 32% of the cities covered by the survey. With regard to 2-family dwellings, the percentages were as follows: higher than a year ago in 14% of the cities; the same as a year ago in 56%; and lower in 30% of the cities reporting.

Apartment house rents were found to be higher than a year ago in 18% of the cities, the same as a year ago in 67% and lower in 15%.

FREAK HOUSES

With the newer forms of "Expressionism" in Art, it is not surprising that we should begin to find indications of it appearing in the realm of architecture. One of the most unusual of these is a gigantic ball, very much like some of the earlier air balloons in appearance, that has been erected at Dresden, Germany, as a spherical "sunlight house". This extraordinary structure is set up on a framework of concrete posts, about 20 feet above the ground and revolves on an axis, very much like a railroad turntable, so as to secure the maximum amount of sunshine. Its height is 98 feet and its diameter 82 feet. The 4 lower stories are designed for business offices and the upper part for apartments with a restaurant or café at the top.

The designer of this structure, one Peter Birkenholz an architect of Munich, seriously contemplates our cities being built up with structures of this kind. He claims as one of its advantages that with such houses it will be possible to lay out streets three times as wide as they are today. Other advantages claimed are greater amount of light and air from all sides of the building and an unobstructed view from any point of the structure.

Recently, a building almost identical in shape and size has been erected at Cleveland, in the form of a gigantic steel ball, to be used as a hospital for the cure of diabetes. Instead of being all windows, this looks very much like a great gas container or tank or a super bell-buoy, built of sheet steel and perforated at frequent intervals with circular openings like the port holes of a ship. Within this forbidding dungeon-like erection, patients are to be subjected to a compressed air cure for the treatment of this disease.

A HOUSE IN A LOG

An American exemplar of a freak house is that found in the far West where a man has constructed a house inside of a log of one of the giant Douglas fir trees. Going into the forest near his home, this man cut down a fir tree 311 feet in height and more than 9 feet in

diameter. The tree was so large that he had to take a log out about 20 feet from the butt in order to get one 8 feet in diameter, which was as large as he would be permitted to travel with on some highways. It took the owner and two other men 5 weeks to hollow out the log. First, they bored a 2-inch hole through the center, then they used a blow torch and burned this hole to a diameter of 4 feet. They were then able to use wedges and chip the heart-wood out in chunks. When they got near the thin sap wood ring at the edge they finished the job with adzes smoothing as they worked. The finished log is 16 feet long and 8 feet in diameter. It contains a 2-room apartment and is mounted on a truck and trailer. The interior is completely equipped for house-keeping, with a built-in breakfast nook, cupboard and wardrobe, 2 beds fold up against the wall and there are electric lights and an oil stove for cooking and heating. The log home is named "Columbus". For, by counting the annual rings of growth it was discovered that the tree was 434 years old when cut in 1926 and was therefore "born" the year that Columbus discovered America. When the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776 the tree was then 284 years old and at the time of the Civil War the tree had become a forest giant and was 371 years old.

"Log houses" were characteristic of America in the days of its early settlement; but not this kind of log house.

THE FREAKIEST HOUSE OF ALL.

What is probably the most extraordinary conception of the kind of house that people should live in—and one which is quite typically a development of this mechanistic age—is found in a proposal recently advanced by a retired naval officer and engineer, R. Buckminster Fuller.

This extraordinary creation which the inventor has termed the "Dymaxion House"—a compound of dynamic design and maximum area—completely ignores all present structural and architectural ideas of a house. It represents three years research and study by its inventor.

As one views a model of it that is being exhibited throughout the country—chiefly in "art" circles—it impresses one very much as a gigantic octagonal circus tent, though it is quite different. The house is not like ordinary houses erected on a foundation nor does it rest upon the ground, but is hung from a mast—similar to a dirigible mooring mast. This mast contains a septic sewerage disposal tank and a storage tank for fuel oil. The house is completely divorced from all dependence on municipal and public utilities systems; for its electric heat, light and refrigeration come from a Diesel engine at a theoretical cost of \$5 a month.

The minimum sized "Dymaxion House" which Mr. Fuller is now exhibiting throughout the country is a 5-room hexagonal structure, 2 stories in height. The first story is not a story at all but is a combination garage and hangar underneath the house. The first deck of living quarters is 14 feet above the ground, a height selected because of its being "the average maximum universal flood height". The structure is 40 feet high and 50 feet in diameter, with a living room 40 by 20 feet, 2 large bedrooms, each with a bath, a utility room containing the kitchen, and a laundry in which clothes are deposited singly whenever soiled, coming out washed and dried in 3 minutes and a library completely equipped with maps, radio, television, typewriter, etc. The inventor does not say whether the library is organized on the same basis as the laundry with manuscripts placed in it and completely published books ejected in a similar period of time. If one, why not the other!

All the furniture and other accessories are built in. On top of the house is a 50-foot play deck, protected against storms and where sun baths may be readily taken.

The outside walls are hollow triangular panes of casein—a transparent material made of vegetable waste—each pane a vacuum. The house may be shuttered off at will by mechanical triangular shuttering similar to that of a camera. It is thus bounded by "thermos bottle" windows preserving an equable temperature. The windows are not of breakable glass and cannot be opened, the air coming through the translucent ceilings, carefully filtered of dust and odors, heated to the proper temperature and supplied with the proper degree of moisture. Artificial light is also diffused equally to all the rooms and in any desired quantity and color, through the ceiling.

What the inventor considers another fascinating feature of his house is that it is inflated throughout. The floors are triangular bladders, blown up so that they are as firm as a truck tire, yet flexible. One of the advantages claimed for this is that babies can play all over the house without being watched, for there is no danger of painful bumps if they happen to fall from an inflated bed to the inflated floor. The inflated floors also eliminate all noise of clattering feet. No warping can occur; for floors are inflated to meet walls, making every joint tight. There is, of course, no plaster to crack, stretch or stain.

Because of the automatic ventilating system and heat and humidity control, the house is self-adjusting to any climate. There is no making of beds, therefore, the inventor points out, for no bed clothes are required. There is no servant problem, since the mechanical arrangement reduces housework to 15 minutes a day; no dusting, for the house is dust-proof.

Shelves are built in the walls like Ferris wheels. All the occupant has to do is to press the button of the shelf that he wants and dishes, books, vegetables come to him instead of his getting up on a chair and climbing to them. A semi-circular hanging wardrobe has a capacity of "32 overcoats and 50 dresses." It seems a great many overcoats! Inflated doors of balloon silk collapse and roll up at the press of a button. Another touch and they inflate and close firmly into position. A fool-proof elevator runs through the mast connecting the entrance with the various decks of the house.

Discussing the major factors which point the need for a revolutionary change in our housing methods, Mr. Fuller said recently:

The majority of women today are suffering from a slavery more abject than that endured by the galley slaves of Rome, due to antiquated housing methods. Women's slavery is greater because it is mental.

The majority of women in no way control the allotment of their time. In this day of 36-hour flights to Europe and universal radio hook-ups, my wife, living in the most mechanical type of apartment house, still spends 10 hours a day keeping the baby from killing herself.

She must be mentally aware of the baby's every movement lest it fall out of a window, down an elevator shaft, off the bed, or be one of the thousands annually maimed by automobiles. She spends 3 hours a day on the baby's diapers, one of a billion women wasting 3 billion hours a day on this one item,—wasted because it could and should be handled mechanically.

Just how the time spent by mothers in caring for these needs of their infant offspring is to be overcome by the new "Dymaxion House" is not disclosed. We have no doubt, however, that some mechanical or electrical device is in the mind of its inventor—perhaps another method of triangulation!

Asserting that housing is 5,000 years behind the times as compared with the advances made in other arts and industries, the inventor of this house points out that we are little removed from the cave dweller—as a matter of fact our present houses are simply a derivation from the ancient cave. What he anticipates from his invention is a house which is best for all, both rich and poor, a house which will eliminate the millions of annual deaths caused by floods, tornadoes, earthquakes and diseases emanating from inadequate housing which can be overcome mechanically.

What the inventor of this house envisions is a factory-made house, which can be produced in quantity for wide and economic distribution. It can be installed in 24 hours at a stated factory price of \$3,000 as compared with the present weary months of building, battling with dissatisfied laborers and costs far above original estimates.

Weighing but 6,000 pounds, it can be installed almost instantaneously by a crew of men belonging to the local service station for housing, who are always available for maintenance and repair work. Standard replacement parts can always be secured from the service station with the same dispatch that one expects from a garage. These service stations, dotting the country, can easily ship a house from one city to another. Its light weight, compactness and standardized form give it extreme mobility, which is an essential of mass production.

The house is really not a house at all but is a sort of hybrid between an airship, an automobile and a garage.

Our readers may wonder why we have given so much space in these columns to this extraordinary suggestion. We have done so because we wish to prepare them for the advent of "a new day in housing." Some of our architects are taking this invention seriously—architects who should know better—and the inventor is transporting the model of his scheme throughout the country, finding interested audiences for his ideas in those "arty" circles which may be said to represent the modernistic form of Art. This model recently formed part of an exhibition of Contemporary Art at Harvard.

The following extract from the catalogue on this occasion is indicative of the kind of mind for which this kind of a conception of home has an appeal:

The attempt here is to raise architecture from the one-tune music box of "frozen architecture" to the infinity of harmony arrived at as in music today, by conversion from the personal equation to the abstract eternity, via a truthful and standard machine. These 4 D designs of Buckminster Fuller, (4D symbolic of a fourth dimension, as the designing method is literally "from the inside out", on a radionic, time, space, quantum basis) take into consideration industrial fabrication, transportation, and service, as being essentially an integral motif of the gross harmonious composition as the ultimate crystalization of the housing itself.

While we are ready to accept almost anything as a possibility since the advent of the radio with its wonders, we find it a little difficult to find anything appealing in this modernistic conception of "Home".

It seems to us that the inventor claims too much. A single house that will prevent flood disasters, stop tornadoes and change the baby's diapers asks a great deal of our credulity.

PEOPLE MUSTN'T THROW STONES

We are somewhat at a loss as to whether a projected 20-story skyscraper made of glass comes within the category of freak houses or not. It at least seems much more practical and more likely to be achieved than the others that we have just described. This "glass house" is

the latest adventure of one of the country's well known architects, Frank Lloyd Wright, described as the "eccentric genius of architecture"—whose adventures in matrimony, quite as much as his adventures in architecture, have made his name known throughout the length and breadth of the land. That he is eccentric there can be no question. Whether he is a genius or not, remains to be seen. In any event he has designed many interesting buildings.

Mr. Wright describes his latest scheme as "an inverted pyramid of glass, copper and reinforced concrete". Drawings of this show an apartment house rising 18 stories from the ground with a 2-story penthouse on top of it. The structure is to have walls of clear heavy plate glass, concrete floors and balconies or parapets of copper. It will contain no structural steel, the whole building being hung on a core of concrete retaining walls.

The building will contain 36 duplex apartments, each of which by a "scientific" arrangement will be equivalent to an average 5-room apartment. The architect plans to design the interior decorations as well as the exterior of the building. The furniture, it is said, will probably be constructed of steel and heavy drapes will be employed to give the tenants desired privacy. The method of construction of the building is quite as revolutionary in the science and art of building construction, as is the building's appearance from the point of view of the art of architecture. It was thus described by the architect recently:

These glass structures will be built around a concrete core running through the center of them and the whole resting on a concrete base set in bed rock.

As the building is carried upward, small abutments will be constructed, giving the whole an overlapping appearance. This idea is to be carried out because the higher the building the more valuable the space. From the central core of the building shelves or floors will extend, and over these shelves the glass and copper shell will be constructed. The utmost in air and lighting conditions will be obtained.

It is estimated that each building will cost \$400,000. The building is to be fabricated almost entirely within a factory, save for the pouring of the concrete base and core. By varying the color and the transparency of the glass individual tastes may be suited. All furnishings, so far as practicable, will be built in. Every apartment is a duplex apartment. The living room extends through two floors. The bedroom stories, projecting in concrete balconies, are set in a continuous steel truss cantilevered at an angle, so that on the inside this story forms a balcony across the living room.

The panes of plate glass which practically constitute the entire outer walls of the building, are to be of a type which will admit the ultra-violet rays of the sun. These are so arranged that panels of the wall may become open windows at the tenants' will. To avoid torrents of

water on the glass in heavy rains every successive apartment will project out slightly beyond that below it, making the building somewhat larger at the top—in this respect following the method of building houses on narrow streets in cities in the Middle Ages, which gave the old cities so picturesque an appearance. Although every apartment will have two usable balconies, each is cut off from the direct view of its neighbor. The designer contends that these glass buildings will be beautiful and that they will not only afford their tenants light and sunshine but will let sunshine, light and air into the streets. The question of how they can be heated still remains to be answered.

Whether this is just a freak idea of an “eccentric genius” or whether it is a new method of building construction that is likely to find favor remains to be seen. It is Mr. Wright’s purpose, we are informed, to erect such a building in New York in the vicinity of 11th Street and 2nd Avenue in the not far distant future.

With such a building actually erected, modernism and self-expressionism will have found its tangible and visible manifestation in American architecture.

Another advocate of glass houses is found in the person of Pierre Blouke, architect, who predicts that by the close of 1933 Americans will begin to live in glass houses.

These millennium homes will be made in factories, sold by mail and delivered by truck within 24 hours. Heat will be furnished by electric light bulbs that illuminate the home. Not much heat will be needed, however, because of outer walls providing a vacuum which will make houses warm in winter and cool in summer. Moreover, Mr. Blouke foresees these houses will come with the essential furniture built in and fastened down as now is done on board ship. There will be a minimum of “loose” pieces.

A YARD STICK FOR SELECTING THE HOME SITE

An ingenious description of the factors that enter into the selection of a home site was set forth recently by Henry G. Zander, Jr. a Chicago subdivider and builder of wide experience, in a statement issued by the National Association of Real Estate Boards. Mr. Zander has evolved a novel yardstick for measuring the relative importance of what he calls home site essentials. Of the 36 inches of this yardstick he assigns to neighbors, or the class of people living in the section, 9 inches, or 25%. This means that he thinks the people next door have that importance, in determining whether you want to buy in that district. Next come property restrictions and zoning; to each

of these he allots 4½ inches. To transportation and the right kind of schools he gives 5 inches each; to stores 4 inches; while to community life and churches he gives 2 each.

The importance of neighbors is very strongly stressed. He advises "Before buying look over the people across the street before you examine the view from the front yard. Look over the people in the next street and inquire of the salesman as to what kind of people are to follow you as purchasers in the district."

Restrictions and Zoning are next in importance in selecting the home site. As he points out, there are very few parts of the country today where there are no zoning ordinances. However, the prospective home builder should find out how such ordinances operate in the section in which he is proposing to make a purchase. Zoning alone is not sufficient protection. One should know what kind of zoning it is, whether it permits apartments, and in that case he suggests that it is better not to buy, even though there are no such structures in the district at the time; for, as he points out, an apartment building may rise next door to your home in a few months, if the law permits it. It is far better that one should purchase a home site in a section zoned for private residences only; for, by so doing the value of one's property will be protected and will insure a higher class neighborhood in which to reside.

In addition to zoning, property restrictions play an important part, and in diminishing value are the elements of transportation facilities, the nearness of schools, churches and provision for community life generally.

All in all a most interesting "yard-stick" and one most helpful to the prospective home buyer.

HOW LARGE IS A ROOM?

The question is somewhat like the famous question, "What's the size of a piece of chalk?"

One of the difficulties encountered by persons starting model housing enterprises is the lack of an accurate means of gauging the possible success of their scheme in advance of its construction, because of the absence of any "yard-stick" by which they can apply recognized standards to the project and determine its probable cost—such, for example, as is employed in the building industry in the case of office buildings. There, the size of offices has become reasonably standardized, as have methods of construction, and in that class of building it is quite possible to estimate probable cost upon a cubic foot basis. But, unfortunately,

this is not the case with regard to model housing schemes, due largely to the fact that rooms in such buildings vary almost infinitely in size.

We wonder whether the time is not approaching when the size of rooms in such enterprises should not become more standardized, and thus enable the development of such schemes upon a larger scale. Not knowing what a model tenement is likely to cost, especially what it is likely to cost per room—and, therefore, not knowing the average rental per room that must be obtained to rent the buildings upon an economic basis—is certainly a discourager to the development of such schemes.

All of which is a prelude to announcing that a Westchester realtor, H. P. Somerville—for many years prominent as a manager of city buildings but now interested in developing suburban apartments—not long ago worked out a table showing the average room sizes found in a number of apartment houses built in recent years in New York City and Boston.

Some 61 apartment houses, all of which were opened for occupancy between 1924 and 1927, were made the subject of a detailed analysis from the point of view of the sizes of the various rooms. The buildings were divided into two broad classes: those in which the apartments rented for \$700 or less per room per year, and those which rented for more than \$700. 33 of the buildings fell in the former class and 28 in the latter. Of the total apartments, 112 fell in the group of those renting for \$700 per room or less, and 58 in the second group. Of the number of rooms covered by the study, 740 were in the group of lesser cost and 421 in the group of higher cost. The average height of the buildings in the lower-cost apartments was 12 stories and 13 stories in the higher cost groups, the greatest height in the lower cost group was 16 stories and 20 stories in the other group; the least height was 9 stories in the first group and 3 stories in the second group. The average rental in the lower cost group was \$577 per room; and \$860 in the higher group. The highest rental was \$690 in the lower-cost group and \$2100 in the higher-cost group: while the lowest rental was \$410 per room in the lower-cost group and \$700 in the higher-cost one.

The following figures give in detail the area, the average size, the smallest size, and the largest size of each of the principal rooms in the apartment houses included in this study, including foyer, living room, dining room, kitchen, bedrooms, maid's rooms and bath rooms.

Foyer—Average	5.5'x10.4'	7.5'x15.4'
—Area	57.25 Sq. Ft.	115.5 Sq. Ft.
—Small	3.0'x4.0'	4.0'x6.0'
—Large	15.0'x16.0'	10.0'x40.0'
Living Room—Average	13.8'x20.7'	18.6'x23.8'
—Area	285 Sq. Ft.	443 Sq. Ft.
—Small	12'x14'	13'x17'
—Large	15.3'x34'	18'x29'

Dining Room Average.....	13.4'x17.5'	14.5'x18.7'
—Area	234 Sq. Ft.	271 Sq. Ft.
—Small	11'x14'	12'x12'
—Large	13'x25'	19.6'x22.6'
Kitchen—Average	7.6'x12.5'	9.2'x14.2'
—Area	95 Sq. Ft.	131 Sq. Ft.
—Small	5'x8'	4.9'x11.9'
—Large	14'x17'	11.8'x18.8'
Chamber—Average	12.2'x16'	12.9'x17.1'
—Area	195 Sq. Ft.	221 Sq. Ft.
—Small	9'x11'	10.4'x12.7'
—Large	14.9'x21'	16'x26'
Maid's Room—Average.....	7.1'x11.3'	7.2'x11.1'
—Area	80 Sq. Ft.	80 Sq. Ft.
—Small	5'x10.4'	6'x12'
—Large	8'x12.4'	9.9'x12.3'
Bath Room—Average.....	5.7'x7.9'	5.9'x8.8'
—Area	45 Sq. Ft.	52 Sq. Ft.
—Small	5'x6'	5'x7'
—Large	7'x11'	8'x13'

While this study concerned itself with high class apartment houses occupied by the higher income group, a similar study of room sizes in the lower income group would unquestionably prove profitable and might ultimately lead to a tendency toward standardization of room sizes in the buildings designed for that class in the community.

A NEW ATTITUDE OF LANDLORDS

An indication of the new attitude that realtors are taking toward their tenants is found in the following statement published in display type in the organ of the leading organization of tenement house landlords in New York City:

ADVICE TO HOUSING LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

The state Rent Laws expired June 1st, 1929, and the state Six-Month-Stay Law expired July 31st, 1929.

The Rent Laws produced such ill-feeling between landlords and tenants during nine years that it may take 20 years to heal the breach.

Housing landlords must remember the only value that housing property has is rents payable by tenants.

Landlords and tenants "should live and let live". Forget all the animosities that were aroused by the few fire-brands on both sides.

We ask all housing owners, whether "United" members or not, before raising rents or terminating tenancies for any reason to get from the "United" an unbiased opinion as to the wisdom of any contemplated action.

We ask tenants who think that their landlords are unfair in any degree to submit their views to us for adjudication.

We are not only willing, but anxious to act if called upon as the friends of both.

Landlords are advised that, irrespective of the Rent Laws, 30 days' prior written notice is required with month-to-month tenants to increase the rent or terminate a tenancy.

Month-to-month tenants are advised that they must give 30 days' prior notice to vacate.

No prior notice is required with tenants under a lease.

APARTMENT FARM HOUSES

An Iowa contractor predicts the passing of the usual type of farm house and announces that the day is approaching when apartment houses, similar to those cliff dwellings that are characteristic of great centers of population, will "tower up from the cross roads" and whole communities will be housed within a single building—just as they are now on Riverside Drive and Park Avenue and other densely populated parts of our great cities. When this day arrives, if it ever does, farmers will journey to their work in the fields at some distance, motoring over roads that are in good condition in all weathers and return to their so-called "homes" at night—it would perhaps be more accurate to say "return to their cells".

It has always been a subject of interesting contemplation for the student of city development to ruminate upon the reasons which have led American rural life to develop on such totally opposite lines from the way in which it has developed in Europe. If the American traveler in Europe keeps his eyes open as he journeys through Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France—in fact every country except England—he will find people living in clustered groups of dwellings in small towns and villages, huddled rather closely together, and journeying out to the fields in which they do their work. This condition is undoubtedly a relic of the days when people drew close together for protection against the common enemy.

Why in America agricultural rural communities should have developed along quite different lines is hard to say. Perhaps, it was because they were so developed in England. And the first early settlers in America, coming from that country, naturally reproduced here the methods of living that they were familiar with at home.

At any rate—whatever the explanation—the fact remains that throughout the length and breadth of this land the farmer lives on the land he cultivates and does not huddle in a clustered group of dwellings with his neighbors and journey back and forth night and morning to his fields.

It is always dangerous to prophesy, but we think this Iowa contractor is imagining a vain thing. There are excellent economic reasons for the development of apartment houses in great cities where land values are high, but there is no economic reason for their development at the crossroads, nor does American farming, as we know it in the East at least, lend itself to the kind of an arrangement that prevails in Europe. The farmer's lot is getting easier and easier every year. With radio, telephone, electric light, sanitary plumbing, rural

free delivery, motor cars and good roads, the farmer is no longer isolated, nor is his life barren of those modern luxuries that are to be found in great centers of population.

Visualizing the situation that the Iowa contractor imagines is likely to take place, the New York Sun commenting on it pithily says:

Somehow it is hard to imagine an American farmer being shut up in a cross-roads apartment building. What would he do on Sundays and rainy days? Where would he go to do his tinkering? With no drains to be unstopped, fences to be fixed, harness to be oiled and mended, axes and mower blades to be sharpened, steps to be repaired, sheds to be repainted—with a thousand other homely tasks taken over by community help or performed in community shops—he would probably be extremely unhappy.

While the American home may be disappearing, so far as our cities are concerned, we still cling to the belief that there is hope for the regeneration of the race in the rural districts.

PLUMBING THROUGH THE AGES

We have always wondered—as every one who has had much to do with sanitation must have at times wondered—what ancient civilization knew of modern sanitation. What equivalents for the modern sanitary bath room did they have, for instance, in the Middle Ages at the height of the glory of Florence? And what in Ancient Rome and classical Greece, to say nothing of earlier Egypt? We have long wished that some one would present for us the history and development of these important adjuncts of human existence through the ages.

This has now been done in a delightful, attractively printed pamphlet of 40 pages, entitled “The History of Sanitation,” published by the Bridgeport Brass Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut. This we feel sure was written to satisfy that same thirst for knowledge that we have testified to, but has developed as a most delightfully informative brochure, susceptible of use in the public schools of the country and most charmingly and attractively done. With its sub-title “Plumbing Then and Now,” and its description as “An illustrated résumé of some of the Romantic Incidents in the History of Plumbing, which is indeed a Trade devoted to the Health of Civilization and the promotion of Living Comfort through Proper Sanitation” one is prepared for a delightful journey through the past ages.

Each page of this attractive pamphlet is a story by itself, with nearly half of the page given up to an attractive illustration. Originally these drawings were part of a comprehensive advertising campaign undertaken by the organization in seeking to market its product. The numerous requests for copies of these effective advertisements led the company to present this little booklet.

Our readers can get an idea of how interesting the book is by a consideration of some of the topics discussed, which include the following:

The World's First Plumber, Water Supplies 5000 Years Ago, The Pyramids and Brass, The "Wall Street" of Egypt Calls in the Plumber, Vented Toilets in Use 4,000 Years Ago, A Sanitary Code of Long Ago, The Fighting Plumber of Old Jerusalem, The Land Drinketh Water of Rain of Heaven, Gardens in the Air, The Handwriting on the Wall, The Bath Movement in Grecian Times, When Plumbers Helped Make Gods, The Last Relic of the Grandeur of Carthage, The Dawn of Plumbing as a Trade, "Plumbarius", Making His Pipe on the Job,—the Pipe Maker of Old Rome, Unmixed Waters, The Gambling Plumber of Ancient Rome, Before Nero Fiddled, Public Plumbing in Populous Rome, When Plumbing Fixtures Were Silver, When Bathroom and Bathtub Were One, Tampering With the Meter in Olden Times, Lady Plumbers and Custom-Made Pipe, Roman Drains, Vesta, Goddess of the Hearth, How Cleopatra Put Mark Anthony to a Test, The Plumber Prepares a Roman Holiday, Snow-Drinking Stone-Builders, The Origin of the Saturday Night Bath, How the Crusader Helped Plumbing, When Plumbing Took a Thousand Years Vacation, When Plumbing Was the Plaything of Kings, The Rajah's Private Bath, Plumbing Progress in the 17th Century, The Lord Mayor of London as Plumbing Inspector, Benjamin Franklin Takes a "Slipper Bath", America and the Bathtub.

Every student of housing and every person interested in the development of the science of sanitation, as well as every person who wishes to be informed on this most interesting subject, will wish to obtain a copy of this fascinating booklet, which can be obtained upon application to the Bridgeport Brass Company at Bridgeport, Connecticut, by sending 10 cents in stamps to cover postage.

THE SUBURBAN TREND

A survey of five typical American cities chosen at random shows that the suburban areas are growing more rapidly than the cities themselves, according to a statement made recently by the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

The suburban sections of 14 smaller towns also surveyed reveals a similar situation, offering the figures as evidence that there has been no general decline in the demand for private residences despite the popularity of small apartments in some sections.

The large cities whose suburban communities were shown to be expanding at a faster rate than the urban centres they adjoin were Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta, Buffalo and Albany.

The Chicago Regional Planning Association states that while the greater increase in number of people still is inside the city, in percentage the suburban area is growing more rapidly than Chicago itself. Using estimated population figures for next year, the Chicago Planning Association finds that in spite of the rapid growth of the central city its percentage of increase from 1920 to the present time is 23%, as compared to a gain of 83% in suburban territory in a 30-mile circle around the city. This suburban area covers 125 municipalities.

The 6 cities of the Niagara frontier region of New York State, of which Buffalo is one, increased by percentages ranging from 1 to 12 in the years from 1920 to 1925, while the open territory surrounding these cities increased by percentages ranging from 15 to more than 70% during the same length of time, according to the Niagara Frontier Planning Board. The other cities of the Niagara frontier region include Lackawanna, Lockport, Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda and Tonawanda.

Buffalo increased a little more than 6% in the years from 1920 to 1925, while 5 townships surrounding Buffalo increased at an average of 46%. Three incorporated villages north of Buffalo increased respectively 106%, 64% and 45%.

This situation would seem to imply that home owners and renters are moving out into the outlying districts by preference in the Niagara districts, says the planning board, but it is a fact that in some instances the city boundaries have not been moved out for a great many years, and as a result few vacant lots are available for home sites.

St. Louis, with a population of 772,000 in 1920 and 856,000 in 1929, has increased 11% in these years, while 7 important communities outside of St. Louis, and interdependent upon the St. Louis district, have increased at rates ranging from 98 to 386% in the same length of time.

The Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs, studying this matter from a little different angle, has found decreases in density of population in the built-up areas in many important cities in the New York City area, although all these have increased in population during the period studied, and some of them very rapidly. The fact that in all of these cities the density of population per gross acre has decreased in recent years would indicate that the suburban areas are growing faster than the cities, according to Lawrence M. Orton, secretary of the New York Regional Plan.

For instance, Yonkers shows an increase of 284% in population but a decrease in density from 43.3 persons per gross acre in 1889 to 32.7 persons in 1925. Albany, which increased 27.5% in population between 1900 and 1925, shows a reduction in density from 22.9 persons to 11.6 persons.

NO STEALING OF LIGHT IN ENGLAND

A RECENT "ANCIENT LIGHTS" DECISION

What happens in a civilized country when one man tries to steal the light of another by erecting an unduly high building is illustrated in a recent Ancient Lights case in Manchester, England, decided by the courts last July (*Jauffred and Gariel and Another v. Joseph Sun-*

light; Manchester Chancery Court, July 26, 1929). In this instance a man—strangely enough whose name was “Sunlight”—started to erect a skyscraper in the city of Manchester, 86 feet high to the cornice line and reaching by a series of set-backs an ultimate height of 121 feet, on a street which was but 54 feet in width. The owners of a building on the opposite side of the street brought an action to prevent the erection of the skyscraper in question on the ground that it interfered with their “ancient lights” and that if permitted to be erected it would destroy the business of one of their tenants who used the premises for the examination of cloth prior to its shipment abroad, for which it was claimed natural light was essential.

This case has unusual interest for our readers because it illustrates so strikingly the intelligent and civilized attitude which the English authorities, and particularly the English courts, take with regard to protecting the average citizen in his God-given right to light. The plea of the greater financial advantage that would result to a property owner by being permitted to overload the land, apparently, has no appeal for English courts.

In this particular case it was claimed by the projector of the skyscraper that there would be sufficient light for ordinary business purposes remaining to the building opposite, considered from the point of view of the amount of light one might expect to have in the closely built up section of a modern city. He further made the rather impudent and extraordinary claim that if the opposite property owner’s light should prove to be insufficient, that the deficiency could be more than made good by altering and enlarging their front windows, and it was strenuously urged that an injunction should not be granted, but that he should be allowed to proceed with the erection of his building and compensate the injured property owner on the opposite side of the street by paying damages, the amount of the damage to be fixed by the court.

The Vice Chancellor of the Manchester Chancery Court, in rendering his decision examined the question of the adequacy of light in different parts of the building with great particularity, describing the conditions in each part of the building affected, and reached the conclusion that the deprivation of light by the erection of the skyscraper on the site opposite was so substantial as to cause a nuisance to the occupants of the ground floor rooms as they would not have sufficient light left to enable them to carry on their business there. For the purpose of that business the Court found that artificial light would be quite useless.

A refreshing expression of opinion by the Court arose in connection with the claim made by the projectors of the skyscraper to the effect that owing to the widening of an adjacent street the eastern half of the building affected would receive increased light, and that this should be set off against the decreased light caused by the obstruction of light through the erection of the proposed skyscraper. On this point the Court very pungently says:

I cannot see how increased light coming to one room can be set off against the diminution of light to another room.

On the rather impudent claim that the light remaining after the erection of the skyscraper would be all that could be expected in a built up portion of a large city and that the owner of an easement of light in a town was not entitled to as good a light as the inhabitant in the country the Court very properly points out:

This is contrary to the decision of Mr. Justice Russell in *Horton v. Beattie* (1927 1 Ch. 75) with which I respectfully agree, and I am inclined to think that if any distinction is to be drawn between town and country, the inhabitant of a dark, smoky town can less afford to be deprived of such natural light as reached him than the inhabitant of the country where the atmosphere is clearer.

On the main plea in which the projectors of the skyscraper were most interested, namely that the Court should not grant an injunction preventing the erection of the building but should permit the building to be built and award damages to the property owner whose light was injured, the Court had the following to say:

First, it is said that the plaintiffs' building is of old fashioned design; that it is "a relic of the days of Ruskin," that if its windows were altered by removing the stone mullions and the ornamental stonework at the head of the windows more light would be admitted to the plaintiffs' rooms, and that if they obstinately refuse to allow these alterations to be carried out they are acting so unreasonably that the Court will refuse them an injunction. Evidence was tendered on behalf of the defendant to show that the plaintiffs were not using their building in accordance with modern practice by refusing to have their windows altered as suggested by the defendant, and as to the feasibility of such alterations. I rejected this evidence as irrelevant, and I do not see what limit could be placed on such suggestions if they were admissible. Could the plaintiffs be asked to pull down their brick buildings and substitute a glass house? To my uninstructed eye the plaintiffs' building is of a meritorious design, and its windows, though not as large as some more modern windows, are not of an unreasonable shape or design. The plaintiffs are, in my opinion, quite within their rights in refusing to have their building altered, which, according to the evidence of Mr. Halliday, would entail much expense and inconvenience and disturbance of their tenants, and I see nothing unreasonable in their refusal.

Accordingly the Court granted a perpetual injunction forbidding the erection of the building in question and compelled the projectors of the skyscraper to pay the costs of the action as well.

We wonder whether the application of a similar law of Ancient Lights in modern American cities might not prove the true solution of our difficult skyscraper problem.

15 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL HOUSING OF WHITES AND NEGROES

With the close of the year 1929 The Cincinnati Model Homes Company has successfully completed its 15th year as a housing corporation, and as usual has met all its obligations including a charge of over \$16,000 to the depreciation fund. It paid 6% dividends to the stockholders and added \$9,600 to its surplus.

The 6% dividend is the first one in the Company's history. Heretofore the Company paid only 5% dividends. The Board of Directors thought it advisable to increase to 6% in justice to the stockholders who on account of the income tax never did realize 5% on their holdings in the Company. Besides, the property is unencumbered, and with no immediate prospects of new construction, will be accumulating an idle surplus. Again, should opportunity offer a chance at new construction, additional capital may be more readily attracted at a 6% than a 5% return.

The Company is financially sound. Indeed, from an original capital of \$425,700 it has grown to over \$712,000 in real estate assets on which it has accumulated a depreciation fund of \$175,951.63 and a \$100,000 surplus.

In other words, in 15 years the depreciation fund and the surplus amount to almost 65% of the original stock subscription, or 38% of the total investment. This means, that in another 15 years the depreciation fund on the older groups—which comprise about 90% of its total holdings—and the surplus will be equal to their original cost. This may result either in a reduction of 13% in rentals, or in additional conveniences, such as hardwood floors or steam heat, without the necessity of raising the rents.

The financial soundness of the Company is further enhanced by the fact, that while the book value of its properties amounts to over \$712,000, its market value, or actual value is perhaps 50% more, since 90% of its properties are of pre-war construction.

The total income for 1929 as related to the total investment falls in the following divisions:

3%	for dividends on outstanding stock
3	" maintenance and repairs including water
2.25	" depreciation
2.18	" local taxes
.60	" income taxes
1.50-	" overhead
.46	" hotel operations
1.90	" surplus
.39	" loss through vacancies

15.28% Total gross.

The 1.90% surplus should not be construed as surplus in the usual sense. It represents the earning on the depreciation and surplus funds invested in new property and equals 3.5% on the re-investment.

Out of every dollar expended in 1929:

26.6¢	went to maintenance & repairs and replacements
24.	" " depreciation (a book charge)
23.	" " taxes
15.8	" " overhead and professional service
5.7	" " water
4.9	" " Gordon operations (a rooming house)

\$1.00 Total.

The average rental per room in the white groups of pre-war construction is \$6.44; in the post-war groups \$8.25. The total average being \$6.79 a month per room. In the colored groups, all pre-war construction, the average is \$4.97 per room.

The cost of maintenance and repairs including water was \$14.91 per room for 1929, which is \$1.82 less than in 1927, the peak of maintenance cost. With the year 1930 the Company anticipates the high curve of maintenance cost to take a downward trend, as the items that caused the curve to go up (such as resurfacing roofs, overhauling porches, replacing concrete walls and cellar floors) will not re-occur for another 10 years.

During 1929, 61 white families, or 35% of their number, and 28 colored families, or 11% of their number, moved—a total of 89 families—as against 113 families who moved in 1928. The reasons given for moving were as follows:

<i>Reason</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>
Moved to better quarters.....	18	8
Asked by us to move.....	13	6
Left city	8	1
Bought homes	3	3
Doubled up with relatives.....	5	1
Moved on account quarrels with neighbors	3	..
Moved to farms or cheaper quarters	3	..
" on account of death in family	2	3
" " " disruption of "	..	2
" Reasons unknown	6	4
Total.....	61	28

The ratio of white to colored is 3 to 1, the same as in 1928. The groups of post-war construction furnished the largest percentage of turnover, 75%.

During 1929 the Company lost 2.2% of its gross receipts in vacancies, half of which was shared by post-war groups, comprising only 12% of the total rental income; and lost only .3% through default.

The continuing good conduct record of the Washington Terrace and its Annexes, comprising 600 Negro individuals, remains the outstanding achievement of our housing enterprise. For the entire 15-year period but 47 arrests have been recorded, or 1 arrest for every 200 individuals. The police record of arrests for Cincinnati as a whole showed 1 arrest for 7.5 Negroes in 1923, and 1 arrest for every 4 Negroes in 1928.

Housing and Health has long since become a maxim in the social equation. Our experience with the conduct record seems to force another member on each side of the equation: Housing and Conduct.

HARRIS GINBERG

Sup't, Cincinnati Model Homes Co.

HOUSING AND CITY PLANNING IN PENNSYLVANIA

From the standpoint of housing, city planning may be divided into two parts—One, concerned with public property and public improvements; the other, with private property and its use. There seems to be considerable agreement among planning engineers as to the importance and necessity of the first division, but the second is still open to discussion. Yet, there is plenty of evidence about us to show that no community will develop properly if it neglects either.

The old form of city growth, haphazard and uncontrolled, is wasteful of human and physical resources. No more convincing proof of this may be found than the homes of many of the less fortunate families throughout the state. All over Pennsylvania our Association finds undesirable housing conditions that have resulted from:

- Narrow residential blocks, where dwellings have no front yards or rear yards.
- Alleys in large blocks causing houses to be built facing the alleys.
- Back streets without paving or lights, or water or sewers.
- Rear dwellings (dwellings immediately behind other buildings) in the center of both business and residential blocks.
- Congestion in respect to lots: dwellings too close together, causing long, narrow side yards and solid row-houses or multiple-dwellings, bringing too many families on a given lot area.

- Dark rooms and inadequate lighting facilities; rooms with no outside windows; windows too close to adjoining walls; windows opening to narrow shafts or light wells.

- Dark halls and stairways with no outside windows.

Bad sanitation; accumulation of garbage, filth and refuse in and about the house, and open vaults and cesspools in the yards.

Fire hazards; frame buildings too close together; tenements without fire-escapes; wooden tenements over two stories high.

Overcrowding in bedrooms.

Dilapidated dwellings; unsafe structural conditions; unfit for human habitation.

Unworkmanlike construction and slipshod repairs.

Depressing appearance; cluttered yards and conglomeration of dwellings and business properties.

These conditions are to be found in 29 cities and towns of the state. With few exceptions one town has about as many problems as another.

While it is difficult to say how many of the factors causing bad housing are entirely public and how many are entirely private, one thing can be said without question, and that is, that the poorest families and small home owners—or those least able—must bear the brunt of defective home environment. City officials and planning commissioners are now faced with the opportunity and the challenge to lessen this waste and inconvenience to the people by devising a physical, economic and reasonable plan, whereby desirable housing may be realized. They have it in their power to do more to improve housing than any other agency in the state. Planning has been legalized, in every city, borough and first-class township. In more than 1000 municipalities in Pennsylvania it is now up to the planning commissioners to say whether our communities shall become better or worse with respect to housing.

Possibly, the greatest obstacle to be overcome in Pennsylvania is the old form of city growth that has gained such a tremendous momentum—entrenched as it is with age and tradition. However, it is encouraging to know that one of our oldest cities in the state, Lancaster, celebrated its 200th anniversary last year by having a comprehensive city plan prepared by an outstanding planning expert. With that precedent established, there is hope for something better in every city of the commonwealth.

Another hindrance to progress in better housing, is the reluctance with which our cities admit their housing evils, and the timidity with which they use what powers they have to correct them. How often we hear it said, "There are no slums in this city. We have practically no housing problems. Nobody complains about conditions here. Don't forget this is not an industrial city like Baltimore, Boston or Cleveland." The only difference is, that people don't see themselves as others do. Progress may also be retarded by some well-meaning influential individuals of the old school, who hold that many families can never afford to live in good homes, and that others have no desire for a higher plane of living.

The question of proper homes or good housing for the masses, must of necessity concern planning commissioners in every one of their projects. If they are to correct the errors of the past, they must have a clear picture of what these errors are. The city pictured by the artist or the architect will not serve for this purpose. It might be well to call in the welfare agencies, the Community Chest executives, the health officers and the visiting nurses and ask them to draw a picture of the city for you, including all the dark spots they have found.

Let them ask the high-school principal to point out the location of the homes of the children who fail to go through school; ask the truant officer to point out his most troublesome districts; have a committee appointed to list all the nuisance sections of the city; have a survey prepared showing the location and number of children that habitually play in the street, because they have no front yards or back yards in which to play; ask the doctors and hospitals to supply a list of homes where most of the preventable diseases develop; have spot maps prepared showing the location of all open vaults and cesspools of the city, and check these against the report of the doctors; plot all unpaved and unsewered streets and note the type of dwellings found there; and have a census made of all dwellings below standard construction and maintenance.

With such social data as a basis, they could designate on the map of the city, those districts that now are or have a tendency to become slums. Such data would help to approximate the economic saving and industrial efficiency that might accrue to the city's unfortunate families if they were housed in decent homes. It might even be possible to estimate the years of life that could be saved, if all children were surrounded by a wholesome environment the year round. Public health agencies and medical colleges are telling us now that much of our improved health and saving of life are due to sanitation facilities, light and ventilation. They tell us that these factors have had much to do with prolonging the average span of life, which is now 10 years longer than it was a generation ago.

Every form of municipal improvement has its value, and the public will pay for it. But, isn't a pipe underground, carrying pure water to the homes of many families, a more valuable asset to a city than a public fountain?

Spectacular city projects, excellent in themselves, will not do much to help the situation. A million-dollar museum will not provide the right kind of amusement or out-door activity for small children penned up in small homes with no yard space. A beautifully lighted and ventilated art gallery will never furnish much sunshine or fresh air to

the child compelled to live in a dark room. Miles of concrete boulevards will not lessen the mud, dust and filth that swamp the little home on an unpaved alley. Placing a sparkling fountain in the public square will not purify the water coming from a surface well or contaminated spring. Even a modern hospital, with every sanitation facility placed in the heart of the city will do little to lessen the dangers of the child living in the grime and filth of an unsewered home without running water or a bathroom, and without modern conveniences.

There is no doubt that we shall continue to build public buildings and the public will support them. But, along with these improvements, wouldn't it be wise policy for city planners to encourage things essential to the public welfare—the things that make for better and finer cities and make life worth living for everybody?

A city planner's responsibility is not ended when he approves a properly platted and well laid out parcel of land. Proper widths of streets and even well-planned lots offer no absolute guarantee against bad housing. We hear more about the slums of London than any other city in the world, and, yet, we know that they consist chiefly of acres of little two-story dwellings on reasonably wide and clean streets. What then characterizes them as slums? It is their drabness, dilapidation, flimsy construction, overcrowding and lack of conveniences—no shrubbery, no trees, no lawns, no landscaping of any kind. In short, an improper setting for normal housing to develop.

Age alone does not produce bad housing. Some of the newest developments represent the worst housing. Why? Because nothing has been done to control it. The right kind of buildings have not been erected and the city has paid little or no attention to what has been built. If progress is to be made, in this connection, city planners must acquaint themselves with right standards of housing, and support the adoption of such standards.

The indications are that the next 10 years will see a development of housing in Pennsylvania such as we have never had before, both as to quality and quantity. Five to six hundred million dollars (\$500,000,000 to \$600,000,000) worth of construction is in the building programme of the State for 1930. A great portion of this will be devoted to new homes. Right now, with the whole state set for this great volume of construction, and with the various financing institutions alert to safeguard loans on real estate, the one outstanding need is to secure the right kind of real estate development. This will necessitate the right kind of land subdivision, the proper facilities and conveniences, and adequate regulations to assure the permanency of such developments. Planning boards have an almost unlimited opportunity of service in this connection.

If the function of city planning is to make better, happier, and more prosperous cities, the home—the basis of our welfare and prosperity—should not be neglected.

BENJAMIN H. RITTER
Exec. Sec'y, Pennsylvania Housing and
Town Planning Association.

HOUSING IN PITTSBURGH

The emphasis in housing work varies according to conditions at any given time. At the present time in Pittsburgh we seem to have an adequate supply of dwellings. In the highest and in the lowest price ranges we seem to have a surplus. Residential rents are coming down. Apparently the coming rental season will bring with it a renters' market.

For the first time since the war there promises to be some real indication of what people desire in the way of dwellings, because for the first time there will be considerable choice.

This is of especial importance to the lower income groups in which the Pittsburgh Housing Association is particularly interested. Four or five years ago we were still suffering from the post-war housing shortage. Today there are so many vacancies in the Hill and analogous districts that there will be competition among owners. Those owners who put their property in good repair are more likely to have tenants on and after May first. Those who do not, are quite likely to have their houses remain vacant. A vacant house, unless under constant supervision and care, deteriorates rapidly until it becomes subject to an order to "demolish or make safe".

THIS IS A TIME OF OPPORTUNITY

The war period—when dwelling construction for other than war workers was discouraged—and the post-war period of housing shortage witnessed a general and marked deterioration in housing. When owners could rent anything at high prices the incentive to make repairs was weakened. When houses could not be vacated except by putting families in the street, law enforcement tended to be less vigorous. As a result we accumulated an undue proportion of unfit dwellings.

Today, conditions are reversed from those during the time of shortage. This means opportunity. Pittsburgh should now get rid of dwellings that are a detriment, that give it an appearance belying its true character of a progressive, modern city. Those dwellings that can be reconditioned should be reconditioned. Those that cannot, should

be demolished, their sites cleared for new buildings or for more adequate open spaces for the buildings worth retaining. One of the clearest lessons of recent experience is that adequate yard space adds to the value of a dwelling.

This evidence indicates that we have definitely closed one era in American city building and have opened another. The old rule was that profit lay in constantly increasing the number of people who occupied a given plot of land. Especially in deteriorating neighborhoods did owners seek to increase their income by putting a greater number of lower rental families on land deserted by a smaller number of higher rental families. But this rule was not confined to deteriorating neighborhoods. The result was land overcrowding, dark rooms, cramped accommodations. Pittsburgh has suffered from this less than have many other cities, but it has suffered some. The rule works only so long as our city populations continue to grow rapidly.

PERIOD OF RAPID GROWTH ENDED

The period of rapid growth of city populations apparently is ended. The immigration quota law and the substitution of machinery for common labor in industry are two of the causes for the change. In other cities than Pittsburgh the poorest districts have smaller populations today than they had a few years ago. In other cities than Pittsburgh the 1930 census probably will show a surprising decrease in rate of population growth. A recent study indicates a nation-wide decrease in the number of children in the four lowest public school grades. In the first grade alone, the decrease between 1918 and 1926 was 357,521. Here in Pittsburgh the latest school survey shows a decrease in elementary school enrollment since 1923, largely but not entirely due to transfer of 7th and 8th grade pupils to junior high schools, and an increased total school enrollment since 1920 "caused partly by annexation, but we believe principally by the fact that a greater number of pupils are continuing their education on through high school." In other words, the indication is that a census taken of the area occupied by the city 10 years ago compared with one of the same area today would show small population growth, if any.

AN ERA OF HIGHER STANDARDS

The quotation above may be taken as symbolic of our future. We have entered an era of higher standards. Applied to housing—particularly to the housing in our poorer districts—it means getting rid of the worst, improving the remainder. In some of these districts there is today a considerable surplus of dwellings. The prospects are

that they will remain a surplus so long as they do remain. The population trend today is away from these districts. The hope of the poorer residential neighborhoods that have not an industrial future lies in so improving conditions that they may check the migration or may even attract new residents, who are today living in cramped quarters.

Some of these neighborhoods have advantages that can be capitalized if there is thorough renovation.

It is the belief of the Pittsburgh Housing Association that the present surplus of dwellings, especially in the poorer districts, offers opportunity to cure the results of neglect since the war. But it would not be beneficial to have so large a number of vacant dwellings that owners who keep their properties in good condition and charge fair rentals will be unable to secure tenants. At the same time it is desirable to have enough vacancies so that owners who neglect their properties will find that they are liabilities to themselves as well as to the community.

JOHN IHLDER

Pittsburgh Housing Association

APARTMENT VACANCIES IN WASHINGTON

For those interested in the question of vacancies in apartment houses a Report recently issued by the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Bureau of Standards setting forth the facts with regard to vacancies in the apartment houses of the city of Washington, D. C., may prove of interest. The facts are set forth in a multigraphed report of 40 pages illustrated by tables and diagrams and interpreting the facts collected by the Operative Builders' Association of the District of Columbia.

Just why a great Department of the Federal Government should expend the taxpayers' money in doing the statistical and graphical work for a private organization of builders is not disclosed. This hardly seems a function of Government.

HEALTH AND HOUSING IN PHILADELPHIA.

Philadelphia's health has recently been exhaustively surveyed by Dr. Haven Emerson and carefully described in a tome of 844 pages, in a study sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and conducted by a small committee under the direction of a paid staff with the aid of a large number of trained volunteer workers. The report is in true Emersonian style—Haven Emersonian—and the sections dealing with

the engineering aspects of public health raise serious questions for thinking Philadelphians. Dr. Emerson alleges that the sanitary character of the water supply is a matter of serious concern because of the high bacterial content of the raw Delaware water and the chemical content of the Schuylkill service. In a very brief survey of industrial plants on the water-front, evidence was found of the danger of pollution through cross service connections between the pipes drawing raw water from the Delaware and those drawing filtered water from the city mains.

The housing work of the city as pictured in the report shows striking need of expansion. This need—long stressed by the Philadelphia Housing Association—does not carry a criticism of the city inspection service, however, so much as it does of the City Council for its failure to provide adequate funds and sufficient inspectors to meet the problem. Commenting on the inspection service of the Philadelphia Housing Association, the Report says: "The investigation and transmission of complaints which may be necessary with the present undermanned and somewhat inefficient city housing inspection force" "should be transferred to the official agents" which would be possible "with the properly functioning city force." This is in harmony with recommendations which the Philadelphia Housing Association has made on numerous occasions.

Dr. Emerson notes several improvements in the city service for which the Association has been working for a number of years; viz., the reclassification of inspectors so as to permit an interchange of service-shifting inspectors from one branch to another, depending on the peak load developed by seasonal conditions; second, the subdivision of the city into inspection districts and the assignment of inspectors to such districts—holding them responsible not only for inspection of complaints but for original inspections so that the causes of complaints might be reduced. One effect of this has been the natural reduction of the number of complaints received from the public.

In 1913 realizing the inadequacy of the magisterial system in Philadelphia, the Housing Association drafted a new section to the housing code which was designed to supplement the usual fine and imprisonment section and the power to vacate buildings. The City was given power to let contracts to abate nuisances when departmental orders had been ignored. Dr. Emerson referring to this power, says:

The city corrects numbers of nuisances by placing direct contracts with general contractors for making the corrections, charging the cost of the work to the property owner. If the charge is not paid in 30 days, it becomes a lien against the property. This would seem to be a very drastic but effective method of securing the abatement of nuisances and would be justified only in flagrant or very delinquent cases.

He might have gone on to state that provision is made to permit the repayment of such liens in annual installments spread over a period of 5 years. "Drastic" is too severe a characterization of this power when one realizes the part which politicians play in attacks upon the efficient enforcement of housing laws.

As a matter of fact, this procedure has formed a very valuable section of the housing code; for it has given power to the Division to enforce orders when the magistrate's courts have been unsympathetic. Without this feature the Division of Housing and Sanitation would be sorely handicapped in enforcing compliance with the law, since Philadelphia's magisterial system produces as inefficient a minor court as can be found anywhere.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN
Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING FEELS THE FINANCIAL SITUATION

The various economic factors associated with stock speculation plus the unemployment situation have brought about reduction in dwelling construction in Philadelphia. Even more important in this connection, however, has been the over-production of dwellings in previous years at too high a sales price, which have not been absorbed by the purchasing public. Hence the situation exists that, while a large proportion of the public are willing to buy if dwellings are within their economic reach, yet the supply of such houses has been insufficient. Mass over-production has occurred in the higher price ranges, which uneconomic practice has resulted in a disinclination on the part of banks loaning building money to finance dwelling construction and the inability of a large number of families, buying beyond their means, to meet amortization, interest, and tax charges.

Builders of dwelling houses stand in need of a statistical bureau that will serve them not only in the field of production costs but in the determination of the buying capacity of the public. They could thereby produce and market homes at a sales price within the economic reach of a larger group of buyers, whether such buyers are of the occupant-owner class or of the investor class who plan to own and rent. Few builders have a comprehensive understanding of cost analyses and the economies that may be made in the use of materials and labor. A statistical bureau would acquaint them with the buying capacity of the public and enable them to place an intelligent limitation on the quantity of

houses to be built in the different sales ranges. This has been clearly demonstrated in the dwelling construction field in Philadelphia during the past year.

The sheriff's sales list, which has reached its highest peak within recent history, bears witness to the thousands of householders who have been unable to carry their properties. In the 10-year period from 1920 to the present, the sheriff's listing has risen from 737 to 11,919 defendants. This represents, in addition to the buyers who have purchased beyond their means and thus suffered a financial loss, the builders who have built houses they could not sell and who have been forced to surrender their equity to the building mortgage holders. Thousands of these houses are now on the market at reductions varying from \$1,000 to \$3,000 below the established sales price at the time of their completion. Real estate brokers are and have been in a panicky state, and the general public has been discouraged from buying, in many cases offsetting natural inclinations, because of the widespread belief that prices are destined to further reduction.

The reaction upon the Building and Loan Associations which has been depressing, has been further intensified by the unwise management of a few such associations whose loans have exceeded the actual values of the properties. Such associations, forced to buy-in properties at sheriff's sale in order to protect their equities, have a large number of dwellings on their hands which they are unable to rent or resell at a price which will reimburse them for their equities in the combined first and second mortgages. This situation is reflected in the following resolution recently adopted by the Pennsylvania League of Building and Loan Associations:

Whereas, In all the city of Philadelphia there is a surplusage of dwelling houses and apartment houses; and

Whereas, The building of unnecessary dwelling houses and apartment houses at this time and in the near future would tend to further increase the number of vacant homes and apartment houses, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Pennsylvania League of Building and Loan Associations, and it therefore recommends to the building and loan associations throughout the city of Philadelphia, that they make no loans on or help to finance any dwellings or apartment houses the construction of which was started after the first day of January, 1930, and for one year thereafter.

This resolution, combined with the attitude of the trust and insurance companies in calling first mortgages and requiring reductions unwarranted even in present market conditions is not helping the situation.

As a result there has been a decided falling off in the issuance of building permits during the first two months of 1930, even in comparison with 1929 when there were fewer building permits issued than there had been during the previous 6 years.

In 1929 the total number of dwelling construction permits was 4196. This is but 52% of the number under permit in 1928, 47% of the average for the 8-year period, and less than one-third of the peak year, 1925. Naturally, there is a corresponding decrease in the number of family accommodations—this year's total being 5918, of which 1683 are in multi-family buildings. Only 41 multi-family houses were under permit which is about 50% of the preceding year. The drop in the number of family accommodations in such buildings in relation to total family accommodations in all types of houses has broken the increase curve for such type caused by the steadily mounting tenement construction over the previous 6-year period.

The new dwelling construction total in 1929 was not a gross gain to the housing accommodations of the city since the demolitions to make way for commercial and industrial expansion razed 614 buildings. In addition to this there were 60 old buildings converted to commercial use making a net loss of 674, and reducing thereby the dwelling house increment to a total of 3522.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN
Philadelphia

CINCINNATI ADVANCES

Cincinnati has inherited an extremely difficult housing situation in that we have some 6,000 tenement houses housing more than 100,000 persons under conditions that can not be made entirely consistent with American standards of living until the time comes when practically all of these buildings have passed out of the picture and are replaced with dwellings providing adequate light and air, proper open spaces and the necessary conveniences for good living.

Recognizing that in all probability it will be many years before such a transformation comes about, the City and the Better Housing League have been proceeding with a vigorous programme to bring about better conditions in the tenement houses as they exist today.

The 1929 report of the Housing Bureau gives some idea of what has been accomplished.

In the last five years the Housing Bureau has made 2,000 new inspections per year and has completed first inspections on all dwellings and tenements in that part of the city bounded by the Ohio River, Liberty Street, Freeman Avenue and Broadway. It is expected that inspection of the entire "Basin" of the city will be completed by the end of 1930.

Last year the Housing Bureau made complete inspections of 2,257

dwellings. It brought about the complete renovation of 127 buildings, had 1,520 important structural repairs made, provided two means of egress for 813 families in high tenement buildings. More than 100 dilapidated and unsanitary tenement houses were razed as a result of the Housing Bureau's orders. Two hundred and forty-two (242) interior or dark rooms were put in livable condition or vacated. All of the orders on 1,284 buildings were complied with in that year and the buildings put in condition complying with the provisions of the Building Code.

The Chief Housing Inspector states in his report, "Great changes have been brought about in the "Basin" of the city. Years of continued and persistent pressure towards housing betterment and the elimination by condemnation of buildings of an undesirable type have had a telling effect and are continually and progressively elevating the standard of housing and living conditions within the "Basin" of the city."

A survey of considerable significance was conducted in the territory bounded by Court Street on the south, Liberty Street on the north, Central Avenue on the east and Freeman Avenue on the west. Two years ago this area had been subjected to systematic inspection and necessary orders issued and reinspections made to see that the orders were carried out. A resurvey of this same area in the latter part of 1929 showed the following striking facts. There were 3027 buildings included—approximately one-half of which were tenement houses and the rest dwellings—housing all together 7800 families. Approximately 5000 were white and 2800 negro families. The total population in this area is 28,000 people. The Housing Bureau classified the buildings as to their condition, on the basis of their recent inspection, as good and bad. Their study showed that two-thirds of the buildings could be classed as in good condition, a considerable percentage fair and only 73 or 21⅓% in bad condition or undesirable for healthful living. They also classified the living conditions of the tenants in these same dwellings as to their standard of living and housekeeping. This revealed the fact that about 70% of these families kept their homes in either good or very good condition and that only 3% could be classed as bad housekeepers or families living under adverse health conditions.

One of the most significant facts coming out of these studies shows that in no case were unclean apartments found in a building classed as good or very good, establishing the fact that generally speaking, families will live up to the level of their environment if it is good, or down to the level if it is bad. It also indicates that there has been a continued movement through the years of families out of the "Basin"

section of the city into the suburbs. It shows also the tendency of the families living in the "Basin" to move from lower to better living standards when their economic condition permits it. On the average there were found to be approximately 3 families to the dwelling, about 3 persons to the family and an average of slightly more than 1 person to the room.

Vacancies were found in 10% of the apartments. The number of vacancies is larger than the normal percentage, which would be about 5%, but this is fortunate in view of the fact that civic and railroad improvement projects in the down town section of Cincinnati will, it is estimated, displace several hundred families. It is believed that vacancies existing in the "Basin" section of the city will take care of the families displaced. On the whole, the result will be good because it means in general the elimination of undesirable buildings, and that owners will have an opportunity of renting apartments now vacant, making it possible for them to properly maintain their buildings without economic loss.

The survey covered an area north of the most congested district of the city. There is no doubt that conditions in the most congested district would not be as favorable as reported by this study but there has likewise been an improvement in that area, where most intensive work has been done and a comparable improvement has been made.

Due to the increase in unemployment that has taken place all over the country in recent months and has badly hit the unskilled wage earner there has been a lowering of housing standards resulting from economic pressure. A number of families coming to the attention of the Better Housing League have had to move into less desirable quarters with fewer rooms, and in some cases coming to our attention extreme room-overcrowding has resulted. This is looked upon however as a temporary condition, due to economic factors, which should adjust itself as conditions begin to improve.

The Better Housing League does not wish to give to the public the impression that the housing situation is all that we should like it to be. Recognizing, however, that the only way of reaching the entire situation will be by gradual replacement of a large percentage of existing tenement houses, the practical measure to apply is to make the best of existing conditions. The Housing Bureau of the City Building Department which is the most important factor in bringing about results, is doing a splendid job for which they deserve the appreciation of the public. The Better Housing League, working in close cooperation with the Housing Bureau, endeavors to carry on the education of tenants through its Visiting Housekeepers, its Housing Institute and its gen-

eral programme of instruction to tenants in the congested districts. The constantly decreasing percentage of bad housekeeping which was disclosed in this study would seem to indicate that its efforts along this line have not been without effect.

The Sanitary Division of the Health Department is also doing commendable work in dealing with bad sanitary conditions. As Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, Professor of Public Health at Yale University, recently pointed out, the Health Department in the past 15 years has been largely instrumental in eliminating some 21,000 outside privy toilets, one of the most serious menaces to healthful living in Cincinnati in the past.

With an excellent City Plan, a good zoning system now being revised to make it even better adapted to the developing needs of the city, with our building code under revision, with attention being given to the problem of checking the development of bad housing in Hamilton County outside of the corporate limits of the city, Cincinnati's housing programme may be said to be constructive and forward-looking.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE
Cincinnati

BRASS BUTTONS TO THE RESCUE

The Director of Buildings of Cincinnati, Clifford M. Stegner, has recently recommended to the City Manager of that city that there be placed on the staff of the Housing Bureau charged with the enforcement of the housing requirements a uniformed inspector with police authority—a proposal that has been approved.

There are many advantages in this proposal. In the past the Better Housing League, working in cooperation with the City Housing Bureau, has undertaken to give special attention to the supervision of tenants referred to it by that Bureau, but it frequently happens, that results cannot be secured, because of an apathetic or antagonistic attitude on the part of a small group of tenants. There are also cases in which tenants leave the flats that they vacate in very bad condition and sometimes even destroy fixtures. The new uniformed inspector will be used to deal with this type of tenants and to make tenants who leave flats that they vacate in such condition, go back and clean them up. He will also be able to represent the Department in court cases and will take care of notifying tenants when buildings are ordered vacated. At the present time the regular members of the police force have this duty and the result is not as satisfactory as it will be with a uniformed inspector.

Another advantage expected is that owners who have heretofore felt that the force of the law has always been used against them and not against the tenants, will realize that the owner's side of the question is not being overlooked.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE
Cincinnati

A NEW INTERNATIONAL HOUSING JOURNAL

The newly organized International Housing Association of which Dr. Hans Kampffmeyer is Secretary with offices at Frankfort-on-Main has undertaken the publication of a journal devoted to the cause of housing, bearing the title *Housing and Building*.

The first issue of this journal, that of October 1929, is attractively printed in German, English and French in parallel columns on good paper and with clear type, copiously illustrated with half tone illustrations. The journal is quite definitely a journal rather than a newspaper or review.

It contains a number of contributed articles, editorial notes by Dr. Kampffmeyer on the purposes and limitations of the journal and contributed articles on certain subjects by well known authorities in their respective countries. Among these may be noted an article on Housing Legislation in France, by H. Sellier, Member of the Council of the Department of the Seine, an article on the Better Homes in America Movement by Professor James Ford, the Executive Director of that organization, copiously illustrated with photographs; an article on State Aid for Building in the Czecho Slovakian Republic, by Dr. Kubista, head of the Ministry of Public Welfare at Prague; an article on Building Societies in the Union of Soviets (Russia) with illustrations of some of the more recent large model tenement groups in Moscow built by the Cooperative Housing Societies.

In addition to these contributed articles there are notes with regard to the organization of the Association and its affairs, a few brief notes of what might be termed news interest and a Department devoted to a review of books dealing with various aspects of housing and building.

The latest issue of this journal, that for March-April, has just been received in this country. A large part of the latest issue is given up to a meticulously detailed article with regard to central laundries and baths in block dwellings built by the Municipality of Vienna by Zentral-inspektor Horn, Engineer of that city. It also contains a brief article by Lawson Purdy of New York, with regard to New York's multiple dwelling law; an article by Walter Koeppen, Magistratsoberrath of

Berlin, on Berlin's new Building Regulations, and an article that will have especial interest for city planners entitled, "The Re-Grouping of Plots and the Development of Building Land" by Vermessungsrat Rohleder of Frankfort-on-Main, describing the workings of the famous "Adickes Law", and, finally an article on State and Municipal Housing in England by James P. Orr, at one time Director of Housing to the London County Council, and a person very familiar with the English housing situation.

The journal which originally was subject to subscription by anyone interested is now limited entirely to members of the International Housing Association. Subscription for American members is \$5 a year for individuals, and a greater amount for organizations and public bodies, the minimum subscription fee for them being \$10 a year. American students of housing and city planning who wish to keep more closely in touch with the details of those movements in Europe than they can through the pages of *Housing* will find it advantageous to become subscribers to this new International Journal.

MASTERING A METROPOLIS*

In this very interesting, well illustrated book, Mr. Duffus gives us a pen picture of New York in 1965, only 35 years hence. Of course the metropolis of 1965 will have a far greater population, be far more beautiful, and, can you believe it, less congested!

Those of us who are professionally interested in city and regional planning, and have for the past two months been browsing about in the ten detailed and technical volumes published by the Committee on the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs, will of course welcome this book; for this group it is a pleasure to record that while we have found many pages, and particularly the maps, diagrams and illustrations, of great value—these ten volumes will always be a mine of information for all of us—but to say that as a whole they are interesting, is saying too much. Very few will ever read the ten volumes completely through.

But here comes our friend Mr. Duffus, and he is certainly a friend well equipped for his job, and reads it through for us—all of it—he could not have written what he has if he were not fully informed of the contents of the ten volumes. He studies and digests it all, consults with the members of the staff of the Committee, profits by their suggestions and criticisms and modestly asks us to count his work "successful to

* *Mastering a Metropolis, Planning the Future of the New York Region*, by E. L. Duffus. Harper & Brothers, New York & London, 1930. 301 Pages.

the extent that it reflects in its small way the spirit with which they began and carried through their huge and difficult task."

Mr. Duffus has done his job well. He has produced an exceedingly interesting book, interesting of course to city and regional planners, but quite as surely to the layman, the general public, for is there one not interested in New York?

Every intelligent dweller in the region about New York owes to the Committee and their exceedingly well qualified advisors and expert staff, who produced the ten volumes and their many splendidly practical suggestions, the duty of reading this book. And when they have done this, they have another duty—that of putting their collective shoulders to the wheel and of helping forward these many splendid projects to completion. Only thus will these projects be accomplished—only thus will the New York Region secure relief from its many ills—ills that are the results of indifference and ignorance. Whatever may have been the case in the past there is no longer any excuse for such indifference and ignorance. To all these we say "Read Duffus and know; read Duffus and do!"

Then, as Frederick A. Delano, the public spirited Chairman of the Committee, says in his foreword, "When the public is once convinced that this is the right way to proceed, that it does not mean spending vast sums of money unnecessarily, that it really means the spending of money wisely, and in the end avoiding the waste of mistakes, the Plan of the New York Region can be said to have been launched",—one might add, be well on its way toward accomplishment, for as Charles D. Norton, the first Chairman of the Committee, said "Let our young people adopt in their hearts a city plan and the citizens of tomorrow will carry it out."

All will be especially interested in Elihu Root's remarks made at the meeting which inaugurated the Regional Plan of New York eight years ago. In this prophetic address, Mr. Root touched upon practically every one of the major questions discussed in this volume.

The region under discussion "contains 5,528 square miles. It is as large as the state of Connecticut; four and a half times as large as Rhode Island, and 250 times as large as Manhattan Island,—which started all the trouble!"

Space does not permit more than the mention of the various chapter headings, which, however, give quite an inkling as to the contents of the book. These are

How We Got Here. How We Grew. On the Job. Traffic Ways. Hours of Leisure. How we are Housed. How Other Cities Have Been Planned. "Make no Little Plans." Planning for Twenty Million. Railways of the Future. Highways and Byways. Parkways and Boulevards. What Shall We Do With the Land? Neighborhoods. The Eagle and Its Nests (Air Ports). Metropolitan Farms. Buildings of Tomorrow. How the Plan Can Be Carried Out. The City of the Future.

There is a very good index.

While all of the book is interesting, Chapter 6, "How We are Housed" is especially good. Also, to the writer, Chapter 11, Highways and Byways, Chapter 12, Parkways and Boulevards, and Chapter 14, Neighborhoods.

Every public library, every high school and college library in the land should have one or more copies of this book, and their patrons be urged to read it.

STEPHEN CHILD
San Francisco

A NOTABLE NEW BOOK ON CITY PLANNING PRACTICE

One of the most important city planning books for general reference which has come off the press within recent years is the book "Our Cities Today and Tomorrow"* written by Henry V. and Theodora K. Hubbard. To the practitioner this book gives valuable information concerning the local progress of plans, the persons engaged in the planning work, the opinions of Commissioners or others concerning the work, and the programmes for carrying such work forward.

To the student no less than the practitioner the book is valuable as a guide to the planning activities in the cities. The text is arranged to show what work is going on in each part of our country. The book, which contains nearly 400 pages, is illustrated with plans, diagrams, and useful tables. The text is free from wordiness and is readable to an unusual degree. The contents include—Historical Review of the Planning Movement in the United States, Legal and Administrative Background, Municipal Commissions and Departments, Agencies for Regional Planning, State Organizations, Public Education to Support Planning, Technical Procedure, Financial Programmes, Plans in Action, Control of Platting, Zoning, Street Plans and Traffic Relief, Rapid Transit, Rail, Water and Air Terminals, Parks and Recreation, Civic Centers and Appearances, Economy of Planning, and Direction of Future Progress.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF
Boston

* "Our Cities Today and Tomorrow" by H. V. and T. K. Hubbard, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 381 pp. Price \$5 net.

TURNING WATER INTO LAND

CHICAGO'S OUTER DRIVE

Not "turning water into wine" as recorded in the Bible, but turning water into land is the theme of an interesting book recently published by the Chicago Plan Commission, entitled "The Outer Drive."*

Beginning in 1919 with the presentation of the Chicago Plan and the formation of the Chicago Plan Commission the shallow lake waters have been gradually filled in and beautified until the lake front is fast becoming one vast park and boulevard—with the exception of that portion lying across the Chicago River.

A plan recently adopted provides for an Outer Drive through Grant Park, north over the Illinois Central tracks to the Chicago River crossing the River and continuing north connecting with the Lake Shore Drive at Ohio Street. The Drive provides four lanes of traffic in each direction and two foot walks.

It will provide an outlet immediately for 20,000 vehicles a day from Michigan Avenue, and it is expected, will handle over 40,000 vehicles a day in a few years. It will complete the most important north-south route in the city and will furnish a lake-front by-pass to the congested loop district. For commercial traffic a mezzanine level is provided in the plans, although this will not be built until later. This mezzanine level clears the railroad tracks at such an elevation that the two-level street will aid the quick development of the surrounding territory, since there will be available boulevard service on the upper level, commercial service on the mezzanine level, and railroad service on the lower level.

Students of City Planning problems will find this volume helpful in their work.

E. P. GOODRICH
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A NEW EDITION OF "CITY PLANNING"***

Republication of a book written fourteen years ago, treating problems of a comparatively new profession, is a not inconsiderable test, not only of the book itself, but of the intrinsic soundness of the early

* *The Outer Drive*, Chicago Plan Commission.

** *City Planning*, edited by Dr. John Nolen. Appleton. Second Edition, 1929. New chapters on Zoning by Edward M. Bassett, and Regional Planning by John Nolen. Revision by Alfred Bettman of Chapter XIX, City Planning Legislation, and by Frederick Law Olmstead of the Introduction. Shelf of References to city planning books by Katherine McNamara. 513 pp., Price \$3.50.

approach and theories postulated by the city planning profession. It is the opinion of this reviewer that, on the whole, the theories stand the test remarkably well, although intervening years have broadened and extended both theories and their application. It is true, however, that many of the difficulties faced by the early planners have been worked out to satisfactory conclusions, and that the profession faces new problems hardly more than hinted at in the original, and unrevised, chapters of this book. Moreover, the first edition of "City Planning" dealt not only with theory but contained many pages of concrete and practical examples, statistics, data as to park areas and highway widths, and instances of community endeavor, which were of great value and timeliness in 1916, but have chiefly historical interest now.

Perhaps a revision of the entire book would have been impossible, since the experience of many of the authors during the past 15 years would have demanded, not only a revision of data and statistical information, but presentation from entirely different points of view. There might have been good reason for issuing the book exactly as it was printed originally. But the additions in the second edition, valuable as they are, make a confusing compromise, particularly for readers new to city planning literature.

Will a new student of city planning be able to bridge the gap between the "Districting" somewhat tentatively described in Chapter III, and Mr. Bassett's vigorous discussion of "Zoning"? Readers who have followed the legislative restrictions on city planning, described in the earlier chapters, will be pleasantly surprised or considerably bewildered by the excellent and truly timely chapter on City Planning Legislation. Such apparent inconsistencies invalidate the claims of the publishers for an "up-to-date" book.

While not, of course, affecting the value of the text, it is a little disturbing to find the careers of the contributors seemingly terminating in 1914, or thereabouts, without even benefit of flowers.

MARY HEDGES BLACK
Philadelphia

PROTECTING THE CITY PLAN

THE PARKWAY DECISION IN PHILADELPHIA

The greatest obstacle to effective city planning in the United States is undoubtedly the difficulty of finding some method by which the city plan can be established without involving such burdensome financial responsibilities as to deter a city from adopting a comprehensive plan.

The difficulty arises in protecting against adverse development

stretches of undeveloped territory which the city contemplates taking at some future time for street purposes, but which it has not yet been able to make up its mind to actually acquire, and which it may not wish to actually acquire for a considerable time. As a result of this situation, property owners in most states have felt free to develop their property and to build on any portion of it, even though they might be erecting buildings in what ultimately would prove to be the bed of a future street—and what was at the time they built the bed of a mapped street. Some years later when the city finally decides to open the street in question, it finds a number of buildings in its way—buildings of such value that if it must pay for them, the cost of street opening becomes prohibitive. It has generally been much easier to locate the street a little further off and to make some change in the plan rather than to pay the punitive damages that are often involved.

The result of all this has been chaos in the city plan and the practical impossibility of developing any comprehensive street system unless it is to be immediately carried out.

As our readers know, this subject has been one that has perhaps given more concern to city planners than almost any other aspect of modern city development.

THE “NEW YORK” AND “MASSACHUSETTS” PLANS

Two methods have been suggested of dealing with the difficulty. One of these, known as the “New York” plan, and frequently labelled as “Developing Streets Under the Police Power”—we think quite inappropriately so labelled—contemplates permitting buildings to be erected in the bed of mapped streets. It seeks to function through action of a Board of Appeals that is given power to grant permits for buildings to be so erected, and authorized to impose conditions which will, it is hoped, limit the kind of structure erected to one the cost of which will be so slight as not to interfere with the ultimate opening of the street when the time comes for that step to be taken. Such a plan has been embodied in statutes enacted in New York state and for that reason is known as the “New York” plan—though it has not as yet been put into practice to any considerable extent nor tested in the courts, even in that state.

The other method of procedure is known as the “Massachusetts” plan or “Nichols” plan and has been frequently described as “Proceeding Under Eminent Domain”—an accurate and proper description. The so-called “Massachusetts” Plan—which has been rather favored by the Advisory Committee on Zoning and City Planning of the U. S. Department of Commerce in its Standard City Planning Act in

which this subject is discussed at some length—contemplates the mapping of a street and the paying of compensation or damages immediately for any damage that the owners of property involved may suffer by the fact that the street has been mapped for *ultimate* taking.

The damages thus accruing, it is expected, will be nominal; and once satisfied, the law contemplates that then no building may be erected in the bed of streets thus mapped. All of this is quite distinct and apart from the taking of the property and the payment of full compensation for it at the time that the street is opened in the distant future. A process similar to this has been in successful operation in Massachusetts with regard to setback or building lines for some years and from that experience this plan of protecting mapped streets has been developed by Mr. Nichols of Boston, the well known authority on these questions.

THE "PENNSYLVANIA" PLAN

A third or alternative plan—which it does not seem to us has had anything like sufficient or proper consideration by the city planners of this country—is the plan that has been in vogue in the state of Pennsylvania for a number of years and which was strongly advocated by the late Andrew Wright Crawford of blessed memory.

Attention has been called recently to the effectiveness of the "Pennsylvania" Plan by a decision of the highest Court of that state handed down in the case of the Philadelphia Parkway (*In re Philadelphia Parkway between 20th and 22nd Streets, 145 Atl. 600*).

By this most recent case connected with the development of the great Philadelphia Parkway through the heart of that city—possibly the most interesting and striking example of city re-planning in the United States—a flood of light is thrown upon the possibilities of the "Pennsylvania" method of dealing with this particular problem.

In this case it happened that in 1925 the Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital purchased property abutting on the Parkway and, a short time thereafter, the City by ordinance authorized the Board of Surveyors to revise the lines of the Parkway so as to appropriate an additional strip of land adjoining it. This would have taken about 40% of the property owned by the hospital. Pursuant to this ordinance the Board of Surveyors plotted on the City Plan the Parkway as thus enlarged, though no actual taking was made. Nothing further was done; no ordinance to open the Parkway as thus enlarged was passed; and no steps were begun by the city to take actual possession of the land within the extended lines.

The owner of this property, a little later, filed a petition for the appointment of viewers to assess the damages, alleging that by reason of the appropriation of this part of its property it was prevented from making improvements to it or using the balance in such manner as the value of the location and various city restrictions and limitations required; and was, in fact, precluded from obtaining a permit from the municipal authorities for the erection on a portion of its property, within the lines as newly confirmed, of any building which would be adapted for business or institutional purposes, and was thus prevented from making ordinary use of its property.

A RECENT COURT DECISION

The Court refused to appoint viewers and dismissed the petition on the ground that the extension of the Parkway did not make the addition a part of the original improvement, nor entitle the hospital authorities, the owner of the property in question, to immediate damages, citing as their authority for this decision the rule laid down by the Court in an earlier case (*in re Philadelphia Parkway*, 250 Pa. 257, 95 A 429) sustaining an act of the legislature passed in 1915 (P. L. 894, Pa. St. 1920, Sections 3187-3189) under which it was provided that owners of land within the lines of the Parkway in the absence of an ordinance opening the street must await the action of the city for a period of 5 years from the time the land was plotted before the right to any compensation arose.

From this decision of the lower court the officials of the hospital appealed to the Supreme Court of the state.

It is thus seen that the issue squarely raised the validity of the "Pennsylvania" system. We can hardly imagine a case that could have been better chosen to present the various aspects of this question.

PLOTTING NOT A TAKING OF PROPERTY

All of the objections which have been raised in other states to this method of giving validity to the city plan were raised in this case. It was contended that the proceedings and the statute were unconstitutional on the ground that the act of the authorities constituted a taking of property without compensation. On this point, however, the Court held as follows:

The general rule supported by a long line of cases is that the mere plotting of a street on a city plan does not constitute a taking in the constitutional sense so as to give abutting owners the right to have damages assessed. See *In re Sansom Street (Caplan's Appeal)* 293 Pa. 488, 143 A. 134).

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The Court points out that the effect of its decision in the earlier Parkway case was to hold that a delay of 10 or 11 years under the particular circumstances there involved, without a formal act by the city taking the property, was an unjust deprivation of property without compensation *for an unreasonable time*—a condition of affairs which should not be permitted to continue indefinitely without redress to property owners who were injured thereby.

As a result of that earlier decision, the Pennsylvania legislature in 1915 (Public Laws 894) undertook to prevent a recurrence of such a situation by providing "in the absence of actual appropriation at an earlier date, the placing of a park or parkway on the city plan shall be considered an appropriation of the land to public use at the expiration of 5 years from the date of confirmation of such plan, with the same effect as if the land had been appropriated for public park purposes, or the parkway had by ordinance been duly opened to public use."

Citing this fact the Court in the present case calls attention to this limitation and says very appropriately:

This act places a maximum period of 5 years during which the city may remain inactive. At the expiration of that time it must pay damages, unless in the meantime the ordinance placing the Parkway on the city plan shall have been repealed.

POSTPONING ACTION FOR 5 YEARS UPHOLD

In answer to the arguments raised by counsel for the property owner affected that this act of the legislature was unconstitutional in its attempt to postpone the right of a property owner to damages even for a limited period, and that a postponement of payment for a period of 5 years, or for any other time, constituted a deprivation of property without due process of law and without compensation within the meaning of both state and federal constitutions the Court very pungently says:

This argument would have considerable weight were it not for the fact that we have repeatedly held that a plotting of a street is not a taking of property within the constitutional provisions, even though the abutting owner is thereby prevented from making full use of his property or does so at his own risk.

THE "PENNSYLVANIA" SYSTEM FOR OTHER STATES

This decision seems to us to hold within it a method by which the difficulties that have been encountered in other states in protecting the city plan may be completely obviated.

We are fully aware that the courts in some of these other states have not looked with favor upon the methods which the Pennsylvania

courts now sustain, but it seems to us that the Pennsylvania courts are proceeding far more in harmony with modern conceptions of the functions of a court and of proper city development than are the courts of other states.

We wonder whether if a statute similar to the Pennsylvania statute were enacted in those states, they would, in the light of present day conditions, be sustained. The world does move and there has come about in recent years a vastly changed attitude on the part of the courts toward property rights and their endless conflict with the welfare of the community. A much broader conception of the whole subject prevails today than it did a few years ago.

We commend to city planners a consideration of the "Pennsylvania" system of protecting the City Plan, in the light of this recent decision of the highest court of that state.

COUNTY PLANNING SUSTAINED IN MICHIGAN

One of the perplexing questions in that vast undeveloped field of Regional Planning has been what to do where jurisdictions conflict—where the Regional Plan group may have one conception of the proper development of streets and highways through a city in that region, and the City Plan group in that particular city may have a totally different view. It is this sort of conflict that city planners have found to present difficulties and which have led them to hesitate to grant to Regional Planning groups and County Planning groups powers that they would otherwise think it necessary to have.

A recent decision of Michigan's highest court, the Supreme Court of that state, handed down several months ago (*Lefevre et al. v. Houseman-Spitzley Corporation et al.* 224 N. W. 659) would seem, however, to settle the question of conflicting jurisdiction between county and city planning authorities along very sensible and fair lines.

Some property owners near Detroit, wishing to develop their property, caused plats to be prepared and submitted these to the Township Board for approval. Under the state law in Michigan it was the duty of the Township Board to determine whether the land was suitable for platting and to see that all highways and streets and alleys conformed to the general plan adopted by the Board for the width and location of such highways and streets, and, if the Township plan was not in conflict with any general plan adopted by the County Platting Board, to approve or reject the plats. The plats were rejected by the Township Board because the width and location of the streets did not conform to the general Township Plan adopted by them. It appears that an engineer

for the owners of the property in question prepared a general township plan which was known as the "master plan" for the township. At the same time he prepared a master county plan for the township and this latter plan was adopted by the County Planning authorities, in this case the County Auditors acting as the County Plat Board. The two plans were in direct conflict. The master plan adopted by the county authorities and prepared by the engineer employed to plat the land located the streets in a much more advantageous fashion to the decided advantage of the property affected than did the township plan; and, it was claimed, with serious injury to other proprietors of unplatted lands.

Under the laws of Michigan (Acts of 1927 No. 260, page 499) it is provided that a municipality "shall not have the right to require any party to conform to a township, village or city plan that may conflict with any general plan that may have been adopted by the county or state for the location and width of certain streets and highways."

The court found that there was direct conflict between the township and the county plans with reference to the location and extension of a street known as State Fair Avenue. In view of the terms of the statute the Court held that there could be no question of the validity of the plan, and that the action of the township authorities was void in the presence of the adoption of a plan by the county authorities which the court rightly held to be controlling.

While this decision has no bearing upon the status of similar questions in other states, in the absence of similar statutes, and is based primarily upon the language of the statutes of Michigan, it points a way to the kind of legislation and to an attitude on the part of the courts that would seem to indicate a course of action in similar circumstances in other states. It is indicative of the difficult questions that arise in regional planning and which make regional planning so much more complex than city planning.

PLATTING OF LAND MEANS DEDICATION OF STREETS

AN IMPORTANT DECISION IN ALABAMA

If the courts throughout the country follow the decision of the highest court of the State of Alabama, handed down some months ago (*Nixon v. City of Anniston*, 121 So. 514) a step of tremendous advance will have been taken in the development of our future cities.

Heretofore city planners have encountered considerable difficulty in the attempt to control subdivisions and ensure the providing of adequate streets when property has been subdivided.

The courts of this country have heretofore pretty generally held that laws compelling the dedication of streets are void and unconstitutional. How to secure streets when property is subdivided and how to control the method of laying out such streets and of subdividing the property itself have, therefore, become somewhat involved with this important question.

The Supreme Court of Alabama, however, in the case referred to holds that the platting of land and the selling of lots according to the plat completes the dedication of the streets shown on the plat, whether the plat is recorded or not. On this point the Court says:

When the dedication of a strip of land depends upon common-law rules, this Court in the case of *Leeds v. Sharp* (*Ala. Sup. 118 So. 572*), shows that the clearest intention on the part of the owner must be shown by complainant (claiming the dedication), who carries the burden. Many principles are stated in the Leeds Case which apply on this appeal. This appeal is governed primarily by the rule there stated that when the owner causes his land to be surveyed and platted, whether the plat is recorded or not, and proceeds to sell one or more lots according to the plat, there is a completed dedication of the streets laid out on the plat. *Manning v. House*, *211 Ala. 570, 100 So. 772*.

The Court goes on to point out also that, based on earlier decisions, such dedication is irrevocable.

If the courts of other states in the country will take a similar position, the future of subdivision control in this country would seem to be assured.